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INSIDE



Three Missing

The Navy reservists whose quick work saved 21 people aboard a water taxi that capsized described the horrific scene in which they made their rescue: survivors clinging to the overturned vessel in frigid, choppy water pounded by rain, telling them more were trapped below.

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Baby for Sale

Although illegal baby sales may have slowed since the United States, France, the Netherlands and several other countries started suspending international adoptions from Cambodia two years ago, the practice persists in poverty-stricken villages.

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Haiti Violence

Gunmen opened fired Sunday on thousands of unarmed demonstrators calling for the prosecution of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, killing four protesters and a foreign journalist in the worst attack since the Haitian president's fall.

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CPA obtains \$1.4M in homeland security funding

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has received its Department of Homeland Security funding assistance of \$1.4 million for fiscal year 2004, even as the CNMI government failed to get its own allotment due to several flaws in its Homeland Security Strategic Plan.

CPA executive director Carlos H. Salas disclosed yesterday the ports authority had submitted its own security strategic plans and study to the Department of Homeland Security for its third round of funding assistance.

He noted that CPA's security plan was totally different from the one submitted by the CNMI government, adding that the agencies covered under the application

submitted by the administration include the Department of Public Safety, Fire Division, Customs, Immigration, Commonwealth Health Center, Emergency Management Office, and Aircraft



Salas

and Rescue Firefighting division.

Salas said only the seaport division would benefit from the funding allocation that was routed to the authority after the federal department notified CPA of its approval.

"We were notified last month that our study and plans were approved by the Homeland Department. We received \$1.4

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Duped students want refunds

Students want to leave NMI, want money back

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

Over a dozen former Saipan University students marched to the Governor's Office yesterday morning to demand the return of the money they spent to enroll with the now defunct institution.

Norman Chan, who translated for the Chinese nationals yesterday, said the students have no desire to work in the CNMI, despite the opportunity that the government has given them pending the resolution of the court case against SU founder Soon Kyung Park.

"They want to get their money [back] and go home because they said they're not skilled workers. It's very difficult for them to find jobs," said Chan.

Labor Department officials led by deputy Secretary Andrew S. Salas caught up with the disgruntled students outside the administration building.

Salas and Attorney General Pam Brown ushered the students inside the

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

U.S. Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (Maryland-R), center, poses for a photo with Becky Cruz-Lizama, the CNMI's Point-of-Contact to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, right, and Athline Clark, Hawaii's POC to the task force. Gilchrest, a member of the U.S. House Resources Committee, has expressed support for the CNMI's nonvoting delegate bid.

US lawmaker backs NMI delegate bid

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Hopes for a CNMI nonvoting delegate to U.S. Congress got a boost, with a member of the U.S. House's Resources Committee expressing support for the Commonwealth's bid for congressional representation.

U.S. Rep. Wayne Gilchrest of Maryland wants Gov. Juan N. Babauta to know that he supports the CNMI's bid for a nonvoting delegate.

Becky Cruz-Lizama, the CNMI's point-of-contact at the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, disclosed this after attending the 11th task force meeting in Washington D.C. in late February.

Lizama reportedly informed the lawmaker during a meeting that Babauta was also in Washington to seek congressional support for the CNMI's delegate bid. Gilchrest responded positively by expressing his support to the CNMI's request.

Besides Babauta, Washington Rep.

Pete A. Tenorio and Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano also testified before the House Resources Committee in favor of the CNMI's bid.

Adriano had expressed confidence that the federal lawmaking body would heed the CNMI's request. He said committee chairman Richard Pombo (R-California), might introduce the bill that seeks to grant the CNMI's delegate bid.

Other committee members, including Guam Delegate Madeleine

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'Improve process for federal grants'

The Office of Public Auditor underscored the need to improve the CNMI's federal grants processing, as it is a major source of revenue. In fiscal year 2003 alone a total of \$60.9 million in grants were given to the Commonwealth.

Public Auditor Mike Sablan recommended, among others, that the government take steps to strengthen

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Sablan

Local

hamilton

House seen to pass ‘stateless’ bill

By **MARIAN A. MARAYA**
REPORTER

The House Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations is expected to present today its final report on the bill seeking to grant permanent CNMI residency to “stateless” individuals.

The report is essentially based on testimonies gathered from three separate public hearings held on Saipan, Tinian and Rota last week on House Bill 14-97. The House is expected to act on the bill, according to the report’s recommendation.

As of yesterday, committee chairman Clyde Norita was awaiting official word from the U.S. Passport Office as to the effective dates that should be applied on the pending

legislation. HB 14-97 seeks to declare as permanent CNMI residents those born between Jan. 9, 1978 and Nov. 4, 1986.

Historian Sam McPhetres, during a public hearing last Thursday, had recommended that the committee revisit these dates, suggesting that it should go back as early as Jan. 1, 1974.

“The Passport Office is giving out passports for US citizenships back to Jan. 1974. But we’re trying to ask the interpretation of why that is. So far, that date is for U.S. citizenships. So we just want to make sure that it doesn’t affect the period of the Covenant as we defined it in the bill. We think it doesn’t. And the dates should stay where they are. But we want clarification where

authority is coming from,” explained Norita.

The congressman assured that the House legal counsel was working with the Passport Office in fine-tuning the legislation.

In the three public hearings held CNMI-wide, HB 14-97 drew nothing but support from community members, although comments against the legislation were being aired outside this forum.

“Well, the comments that were made were not because they were against it. But they were saying that there are other problems in the CNMI that we should be working on as a Legislature.

“And there are 18 of us in the House and we’re all working on specific issues. And the

biggest problem that they mentioned, other than we should be concentrating on the stateless issue, is that (on) issues of funding and money problems,” Norita said, alluding to remarks aired via the John Gonzales television show.

The committee chairman pointed out that since the start of the 14th Legislature, numerous money measures have been introduced.

“I guess the biggest concern is that we just have so little money that the Committee on Ways and Means has to figure out exactly how to use that money for community projects or programs and so forth.

“This is my direction because it’s an issue that, as Sam [McPhetres] mentioned earlier,

it’s a ‘mistake’ that we need to correct. I feel the same way. It’s something that should have been corrected a long time ago,” said Norita.

There are reportedly about

350 “stateless” persons born in the Commonwealth, but roughly about 160 remain in the CNMI, according to research done by Randy Mendoza, the spokesman for the group.

CPA: Nothing concrete yet on Tinian screeners

By **EDITH G. ALEJANDRO**
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority disclosed yesterday that arrangements are still being made on the federalization of the West Tinian International Airport, as preparations continue for the first direct flight from Shanghai, China, next month.

CPA executive director Carlos H. Salas said that because of the decision of China Southern Airlines to begin direct air service to the West Tinian International Airport on April 23, 2004, there would also be slight changes on the arrangements being undertaken by the CPA and the Transportation Security Administration-Saipan Office.

“I heard that they would move their direct flight to April. We have not finalized yet on when the screeners would be deployed or how many. We have yet to tackle that with the TSA. Nothing is concrete yet and we would just wait for the final decision of the airline,” said Salas in an interview.

He earlier disclosed that the West Tinian International Airport would be federalized this month when China Southern Airlines begins its twice-a-week direct air service from Shanghai to the island.

The CPA earlier battled for March 18 but the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino disclosed last week that China Southern Airlines would begin its direct Shanghai flights on April 23, 2004.

TSA-Saipan also said that it is waiting for China Southern Airlines’ confirmation of its regular air service to the West Tinian International Airport before taking over security operations at the airport.

TSA-Saipan Customer Support and Quality Improvement Manager Viola Sablan said the federal agency has to ensure that certain security measures are in place and that China Southern Airlines has concurred with their flight service to Tinian before the TSA

can move forward with its plan of federalization.

Sablan stressed the commitment of the TSA in ensuring that all necessary requirements are complied with, along with the needed security measures at the Tinian sirport.

She said that, once all of the necessary requirements are satisfied and approved, TSA-Saipan would move forward with its plans of federalization.

China Southern Air will be using a Boeing 757 with a

seating capacity of 198 passengers for each flight. This would translate to an additional 15,000 visitors from China to the CNMI this year alone.

Once the Tinian International Airport is approved to handle outbound international passengers, the flights will go directly from Shanghai to Tinian, according to Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino chair Michael Kwan.

An Associated Press report said that in 2003 Shanghai’s population swelled to more than

20 million people and the city boasted the highest per capita income among all cities in China. Shanghai’s economic growth last year was even higher than the national average of 8 percent. This makes Shanghai a natural market to attract China’s ever-growing traveling population.

The twice-weekly flights from Shanghai to Saipan will depart at 9pm local time every Monday and Friday and arrive 3:30am local time every Tuesday and Saturday morning.

eye
clinic

cars



OES PTSA meeting today

The acting Principal of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of its students that the PTSA meeting will be held today, March 9, 2004, 6pm, at the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Chacha PTSA meeting on Thursday

Chacha Junior High School will have a Parent Teacher Student Association meeting for parents and legal guardians of eighth grade students Thursday, March 11, at the school’s cafeteria from 6 pm-7 pm.

The agenda of the meeting will cover the eighth grade promotional ceremony. All parents and legal guardians are encouraged to attend the meeting.

Also, the Chacha Junior High School Chapter of the National Honor Society is sponsoring an Easter Food Drive to support those families who are in need during the Easter season.

Food will be collected beginning today, March 9, until Wednesday, April 7. Donors are asked to turn food in to the administration office of the school to Erica Sonoda or Tina Kaneshi. All types of canned and non-perishable foods will be accepted. All food collected will be donated to Karidat Social Services.

SCC committee meetings set

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has scheduled separate meetings this week for two of its standing committees.

The chamber’s Education Committee is having a committee meeting tomorrow, March 10, 4pm, at the SCC conference room.

The Public/Private Efficiency Committee is convening a meeting Thursday, March 11, 8:30am, also at the SCC conference room.

Committee members are asked to confirm their attendance if they plan on attending the meetings. The agenda will be emailed to members after confirmation of attendance.

Environment prize seeks nominees

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes is seeking nominations for its 2004 awards. The Barron Prize recognizes young people ages 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Half of each year’s winners are chosen for their work to protect the environment. Winners receive \$2,000 to support their service work or higher education.

Nomination deadline is April 30, 2004. For more information and to nominate, visit www.barronprize.org. Barbara Ann Richman Program Director Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes PO BOX 17 Boulder, CO 80306 (970) 875-1448 www.barronprize.org

NMA fundraising set

The Northern Marianas Academy seniors are trying to raise funds for an upcoming trip to Cairns, Australia.

Their main fundraiser will take place on Friday, March 12, at 5pm at the NMA campus.

“On behalf of the Northern Marianas Academy seniors we would like to apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your understanding and support,” the class said in a statement.

1040 Form distribution set

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI residents that the distribution of the 2003 1040 forms and instruction has already begun. Those who would like to pick up a copy can drop by at the Office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the DanDan Commercial Center from 8am to 4pm.

All residents are asked to pick up the forms during regular business hours. Please be reminded that the deadline for filing 2003 1040 is Thursday, April 15, 2004 at 12am (midnight).

DES raffle draw postponed to May

The Dandan Elementary School has postponed its 6th Annual Cultural Day Raffle Drawing and Festivities from Feb. 14 to May 22.

“We apologize for the inconvenience this has brought upon the parents and others who have made efforts to participate in this school function. On behalf of the administration, teachers, parents, students, and the PTA officers of their school community, we thank you for your understanding and continued support in every way possible,” said the school in a media statement.

NMC math placement test set

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting its summer 2004 Math Placement Test in April and May.

The first test will be held on April 23, a Friday, from 10am to 12 noon, at Room D-1 of the NMC campus.

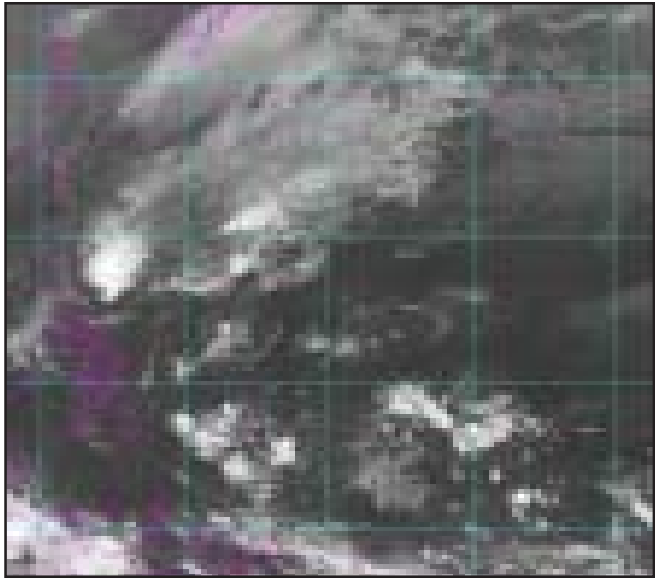
The second exam is on May 14, also from 10am to 12 noon, at Room D-1 of the NMC campus.

Examinees need to bring a picture ID, pen/pencil, and a calculator (optional). Acceptable picture ID’s include the NMC Picture ID, which is needed to be entered into the system; driver’s license, passport, other school picture ID, or CNMI immigration card. No ID, no test.

NMC said in a statement that the examination will be on first-come, first-served basis only. It will not be accepting reservations as there are limited seats available.

Admittance to the testing room will not be allowed after the starting time. Math placement slips are good for one year from test date.

WEATHER FORECAST



PICTURE TIME:1:00 A.M. MARCH 8, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fresh to strong trade winds across Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the equator and 6n from 130e to 180. In addition...isolated thunderstorms are located within this area from 141e to 149e. Low and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated with a cold front and shear line north of the Mariana Islands extend up to 200 miles north of a line from 19n130e to 20n140e to 25n153e. Convergent trade winds west of the Mariana Islands are generating scattered showers between 12n and 16n from 139e to 143e.

SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 86. Lows near 78.

GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 86. Lows near 78.

PALAU
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

POHNPEI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

YAP AND ULITHI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 20 kt.

CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

MAJURO
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 20-25 kt.

	CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
	Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
	Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
	Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
	Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
	London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
	Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
	Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
	Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
	Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
	New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
	Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
	Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
	Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
	Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
	Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
	San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
	Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
	Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
	Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)

Potential liability in grant worries PSS



ROADSIDE SAFETY WORKSHOP

JOHN RAVELO

Greg Schertz, safety engineer at the Federal Highway Administration's Central Federal Lands Highway Division in Colorado, conducts a workshop on the design and maintenance of the roadside to enhance safety of vehicles that run off the road, in this photo taken at the Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center last week.

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Concerned about liabilities, the Public School System wants the education commissioner included as a signatory for the school grants being doled out under the administration's Education Initiative.

Board of Education chair Roman C. Benavente said that, based on the draft agreement—particularly between the Governor's Office and the Saipan Southern High School for purchase of computers—only the school principal is obliged to sign off.

He said this poses concerns, especially when the initiative requires that PSS secure insurance for computers to be purchased out of the grant money.

SSHS is reportedly receiving \$250,000 from the governor's Education Initiative for the purchase of about 250 computers.

"PSS' concern is that this type of liability falls under the board and the commissioner. It can't just be executed at the principal level. So the signing should include the commissioner," he said.

Benavente said he wants immediate settlement of the issue to ensure speedy release of the grant money for the school.

"We need this grant. This is already a promise that the public expects from the administration. The kids should better receive this grant as soon as possible," said Benavente.

He suggested that to avoid "animosity," the administrator should just donate the computers

without any agreement. "I think that's better. They [administration] can just give the computers."

He said another meeting is set for today between the administration, the commissioner, and the board to discuss the draft agreement.

The initiative is composed of seven different grants that would address the chronic lack of supplies in schools.

These include the Computers in Classrooms pilot program, which seeks to equip at least an entire class in a public middle or high school with laptop computers; the Teacher Resource and Respect Grant; the Teacher of the Year Award; the Development Director pilot program; the Healthy Students pilot program, and the Performance Improvement Grants for students.

Wolf heads NMC film department

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College has taken in Emmy Award winner Butch Wolf to head its newly created film and TV department.

Wolf, who won an Emmy for best sound for the movie "Hunt for Red October," used to work with NMC as a business partner and instructor at the NMC/Pacific Rim Academy's film and TV school.

NMC said Wolf is still the best man for the job because of

his expertise in the field.

His appointment as chair came as the NMC Board of Regents approved the move to make the contractual program a separate department within the college.

This would now allow film and TV students to pay the regular NMC tuition instead of a special rate of over \$1,500 each per semester.

NMC officials had projected that the college would lose the film and TV joint program by June this year if it were not made into a department.

PRA has reportedly been

incurring huge losses under its contractual partnership with NMC.

Both parties believe that the program would not be an added burden to the college because it would be self-sustaining.

Wolf in a recent statement before the NMC board said the entire Commonwealth would greatly benefit from the program.

NMC began its film and TV program in spring 2002 using PRA studio equipment and instructors, including professionals from Hollywood.

There are 15 students currently enrolled with the program.

Man charged for alleged battery

Police yesterday lodged a criminal complaint against a man for allegedly beating up his 17-year-old girlfriend who had just given birth.

Sidney Aguon Aldan faces assault and battery and disturbing the peace charges.

Superior Court judge Ramona Manglona issued an arrest warrant against Aldan Sunday and set his bail at \$5,500.

Aldan allegedly beat up his girlfriend last Feb. 29 when the latter asked him to look after their eldest daughter. The girlfriend was then watching over their two-week-old baby.

The victim told police that Aldan severely beat her up as if she was a man—punching her and kicking her with his steel-toed shoes. She said this was not the first time Aldan attacked her.

Police who responded to the scene reportedly observed bruises on the teen's left arm and right leg. (*John Ravelo*)

Crime Stoppers seeks help in Koblerville robbery case

The NMI Crime Stoppers is seeking the help of the community in solving an attempted robbery incident in Koblerville where an unknown suspect attacked a poker game room's cashier Sunday morning.

Crime Stoppers coordinator Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said around 10:30am Sunday, the Department of Public Safety received a report of attempted robbery at the Sam's Poker in Koblerville. The suspect also sprayed mace on the face of the victim, cashier Feng Zhun Piao.

According to reports, the unidentified suspect entered Sam's Poker around 10am and began playing in one of the machines. Shortly after, he called the victim and complained that the machine he was playing on was malfunctioning.

"He asked the cashier to check on the machine, saying it has a problem," said Blas. The cashier checked on the machine and found that it was working and in good condition.

The suspect then attacked the cashier and sprayed pepper mace on his face. The suspect also attempted to choke him. The victim fought back. After a few minutes, an unidentified customer entered the establishment, prompting the suspect to flee.

The victim immediately called for police assistance and reported the incident. Piao also sought medical attention due to the pepper spray.

The suspect was described as wearing a green long-sleeved shirt, long beige pants, medium built, dark complexioned and with long sideburns. The suspect also used a white cloth to cover his face.

The NMI Crime Stoppers urged individuals who may have knowledge of the incident to call 234-7272. The Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 in cash for information leading to an arrest and recovery of stolen goods. All calls are anonymous. (*Edith G. Alejandro*)

BEACH ROAD

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

A smear in Hong Kong

As the State Department reported last month, China has made no progress in expanding political freedom or easing the repression of political and religious dissenters in the past year. If anything, it has gone backward. Now it is engaged in one of its sporadic attempts to substitute token gestures for genuine compliance with international human rights norms. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell hinted last week that the United States might seek a resolution condemning Beijing's violations at the United Nations Human Rights Commission's annual meeting in Geneva next month, after passing up such action last year. That would be an embarrassment to the new president, Hu Jintao, who would like to be seen as a pragmatist and a modernizer. So one of the top imprisoned democracy activists on Washington's list, Wang Youcai, was abruptly released and flown to exile in the United States on Thursday. A Tibetan nun was released last month, and the prison sentence of an advocate for China's persecuted Muslims was reduced.

Such buyoffs often happen this time of year and usually suffice at least for the European Union, which soon may vote to lift its ban on arms sales to China. This season's pre-Geneva campaign, however, has been overshadowed by China's ugly new offensive against the pro-democracy movement of Hong Kong. At the beginning of this year Beijing-controlled media and politicians began a series of attacks on politicians and organizers who have been calling on China to fulfill its commitment to allow democratic elections for the city's chief executive and legislature. In language reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution, leaders such as Martin Lee and Lee Cheuk-yan, both elected members of the legislative council, have been called "unpatriotic" subversives. When the two politicians and several others traveled to Washington last week to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the attacks escalated.

Mr. Lee and his colleagues hardly represent a mortal threat to China or its leaders. They testified that they support Chinese sovereignty in Hong Kong and find much to praise in Beijing's new leadership. What they propose is in Mr. Hu's own best interest: a full implementation of the "one country, two systems" formula that China promised when it took control of Hong Kong—and not now, but in 2007 and 2008. Hong Kong's Communist-appointed government is wildly unpopular; its attempt to push through an anti-subversion law last summer triggered a historic anti-government demonstration. Free elections in Hong Kong would replace this wobbly regime with moderates who could offer stable government—and an attractive model for Taiwan, which would consider unification with China only if it could preserve its own thriving democracy.

Yet, rather than accommodate itself to the democrats, in Hong Kong or Taiwan, Mr. Hu's administration still seeks to control them through threats and intimidation. The new smear campaign appears designed not only to pre-empt any discussion about electoral reforms but also to head off a possible victory by the democrats in upcoming elections for the legislative council. Though only half the seats are chosen by popular ballot, the democrats have a chance to gain a majority; that might force some partial power-sharing. Beijing's inability to recognize that such an experiment in pluralism could be worthwhile for both Hong Kong and China is a measure of how far Mr. Hu's administration remains from accepting basic principles of human rights. More than the token release of a couple of prisoners, that failure should inform the administration's decision about whether to insist that China's record once again be debated before the U.N. commission.

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Democracy's bus is rolling in Iraq

By MAX BOOT

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Iraq is starting to resemble the 1994 movie "Speed." Like the bus on which Sandra Bullock and company were trapped, the country is in constant danger of blowing up. To avoid disaster, it has to keep moving, crashing through some obstacles and avoiding others. As long as it maintains momentum, its occupants will survive.

Too many real bombs have been blowing up in Iraq recently. But as horrifying as their consequences are, the political bombs that haven't blown up are even more significant.

There has been a danger of outright civil war erupting among Sunnis intent on regaining their old privileges, Shiites bent on holding early elections that would give them governmental control and Kurds determined to maintain their autonomy. L. Paul Bremer III has been playing the Keanu Reeves role, trying to keep the bus in one piece.

Bremer's efforts were rewarded this week when the 25-member Iraqi Governing Council agreed on an interim constitution that is a marvel of liberalism. It guarantees free speech, free religion, free assembly and numerous other rights that are taken for granted in the West but are conspicuously absent in the Arab world. Despite an attempt by some clerics to impose Islamic dictates, the constitution says only that Sharia will be one source among many for Iraqi law. Sure, the document leaves important issues unresolved, such as the future role of political militias, but it's pretty impressive that agreement was reached at all by a fractious group of Iraqis.

The biggest outstanding issue is how to select an interim government after the formal U.S. occupation ends June 30. Bremer pushed for caucuses; Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the leader of Iraq's Shiites, insisted on elections. In a development reminiscent of Winston Churchill's famous quip about battleship procurement ("The admiralty asked for six ships, the government offered four, so they compromised on eight"), they seem to be heading for neither elections nor caucuses. Although the exact mechanism remains undetermined, power is likely to pass on June 30 to an unelected provisional government, probably an expanded Governing Council, which will prepare for elections by Jan. 30.

Sistani deserves kudos for abandoning his earlier insistence on immediate nationwide balloting, which would have been

unworkable. The ayatollah's willingness to compromise suggests a keen awareness of his adopted country's troubled history.

In 1920, Iraqi Shiites led a bloody rebellion against British rule. The British, eager to pull out, handed over authority to Sunnis led by a Hashemite royal family imported from Hijaz. The Shiites were frozen out of power for the next eight decades. Sistani doesn't want to repeat that mistake by forcing out coalition troops prematurely or making Iraq ungovernable. Thus he was willing to back down after U.N. envoy Lakhdar Brahimi agreed that elections couldn't be held right away.

There is more good news coming from Iraq. Thanks in part to the much-maligned work of Halliburton, the country's oil production and electricity generation will soon surpass prewar levels. The number of coalition soldiers killed in January and February (75) was 52 percent lower than in November and December (158). The number of U.S. soldiers wounded fell even more during that period — to 260 from 638.

Of course, the glad tidings shouldn't be exaggerated. One reason why attacks on coalition soldiers are down is that, as Tuesday's atrocities in Baghdad and Karbala demonstrate, terrorists are finding Iraqis an easier target. But although the terrorists can kill and maim, they cannot win public support. In the Sunni Triangle, where most of the violence is occurring, 21 imams issued a "fatwa" condemning "any act of violence against Iraqi state government workers, police and soldiers."

As responsibility for fighting insurgents and criminals falls more squarely on Iraqi shoulders, the number of foreign casualties should decline still further. Coalition troops won't be able to leave Iraq for years, but they will be able to concentrate their efforts outside major cities, where they will be less vulnerable to attack. Having Iraqis, not Americans, patrol city streets should also remove some of the resentments fostered by foreign occupation.

More bombs, both real and metaphorical, are certain to go off in the days ahead, but Iraq already has confounded many Western "progressives" who doubted that the Arab world could ever make progress. The bus may be rickety and it may have lost some passengers, but — guess what? — it's on schedule toward its final destination: democracy.

Boot is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

A fight for hope

By **MICHAEL ALVEAR**

Special to The Washington Post

After President Bush announced his support for a constitutional amendment to prevent same-sex marriage, a heterosexual friend stumped me with this question: “Why are you fighting to prevent people from taking away rights you don’t have?”

The truth is that even if gays beat back a constitutional amendment, nothing will have changed. If we win, we will not win the right to marry. If we win, we’ll win the right to continue our inability to get married.

So why has this hit the gay community so hard? Some of my friends have cried on the phone, and others have gone into shock.

Gay men and lesbians have never reacted to pending legislation as emotionally as they have now. Not even with the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. That proposed legislation would have forbidden employment discrimination based on sexual orientation (it lost by one vote in the Senate).

There was no mass mobilization by gay men and lesbians then. There wasn’t the kind of profound sense of loss and hurt that we’re feeling now. Why? Because there was, and still is, a way around job discrimination: lying. We can always push the “cloak” button and turn invisible by acting straight and keeping our personal lives to ourselves.

The same thing could be said about other institutions that insist we remain invisible. How do we stay in the military if we’re gay? Lie. How do we stay in the church? Lie. How do we stay in our families? Lie.

But how do we lie our way into marrying the person we love?

How do we lie our way into hospital visitation rights when our partners are on their deathbeds?

How do we lie our way into getting Social Security survival benefits for our kids?

It’s one thing to be born into discrimination, to grow up with it. It’s one thing to have discriminatory laws on the books for so long that you just sort of take them for granted. But it’s another thing to watch legalized discrimination coming.

Maybe that’s why it’s hit us so hard. Because we’re watching prejudice and bigotry not as a done deal but as a deal about to get done. To us.

Another reason is the “glimmer” factor. With the Massachusetts court ruling allowing same-sex marriage, hope glimmered on the eastern horizon. As with the blind person who sees light and color for the first time, having the room go completely dark again makes the pain insufferable.

Or maybe it’s the emotional quality of the Constitution itself. We all grew up, straight or gay, revering the instrument that makes America the great social experiment of human history.

The Constitution is the seat of America’s soul. It is the symbol of our freedom, a living, breathing testament to the consciousness of fairness and justice. To see some Americans shaking the spray can to paint anti-gay graffiti on the Constitution is almost too much to bear.

Or maybe it’s because we’ve all held out a subconscious hope that the Constitution would do for us what it did for women, African Americans and other minorities—end legalized discrimination.

Now the document that became the life-support system for some groups is about to have its air supply cut off for another.

Yes, we’re fighting to prevent people from taking away rights we don’t have. The irony does not escape us. But neither does hope.

Dinaña Mina’gof - Silabrasion I Haggan

Mandaña kon mina’gof i Chamorro Mariñas ginen Guåhan, Tinian, California, Sa’ipan, Luta, yan otro siha na lugât giya ‘Guam Reef Hotel’ gi ma’pos na mes gi Febreru bente i kuarto yan bente i singko para u ma silebra i mina tres años na kompetensian baila yan lalai. I thema na sâkkan – *Silabrasion I Haggan*. Todu i grupon Chamorro ni manpattisipao gi katigorihan Antigu manmama’tinas bailan yan lalai put i Haggan.

Manñaonao i grupon *Paraisu, Natibu, Irensia, Taga Cultural Dancers*, yan *Kutturán Chamorro* gi kompetensia. Guaha manñaonao gi todû i tres na katigoriha: i Antigu, Española yan Komtemporário (pâ’go na tiempo), yan kontodu i tres na dibision: A – Ilementário na idât famagu’on, i ‘B – Middle School’, yan i ‘C – High School’.

I grupon *Paraisu* chumule’ i mas takkilo’ na onru gi kompetensia (‘Overall Winner’), yan manmâs maolek gi katigorihan komtemporário gi ‘Non-Divisional’, primet gi dibision ‘B’, yan sigundu gi dibision ‘A’ yan ‘C’. I gumehelulu’i esti na grupu si Tom Concepcion.

I grupon *Natibu* gumâna i mas mâolek na bailan antigu yan Española na premiu gi ‘Non-divisional Award’. I gumehelulu’i esti na grupu si Benjie Santiago.

I grupon *Irensia* primera gi kompetensian dibision ‘A’. I gumehelulu’i esti na grupu si Cira McMillan.

I grupon *Taga Cultural Dancers*, ginen Tinian, gumâna i sigundu na premiu gi dibision ‘B’. I gumehelulu’i esti na grupu si Librada Cruz.

I uttumu na grupu ginen i komunidât yan ginen hiyon Guåhan i grupon *Kutturán Chamorro* ginen ‘California’. Siha mâs takkilo’ gi dibision ‘C’. I gumehelulu’i esti na grupu si Heidi Quenga.

Ântes ha’ di u fandaña i grupon Chamorro gi Febreru diha bente i kuarto yan singko, mankompetensia i grupon i eskuela siha giya Gef Pâ’go na sagan dinaña giya Inalahan. Gi dibision ‘A’ - mangâna i grupon *Linala Kinahulu* ginen Eskuelan C.L. Taitano, dineririhe as Victor Tuquero. I chumule’ i mas takkilo’ na onru gi kompetensia (‘Overall Winner’), dibision ‘B’, yan katigorihan Española gi ‘Non-Divisional’, i grupon *Inetnon Natibu* ginen Eskuelan Inarajan ‘Middle’, dineririhe as Vince Reyes. Sinengenduyi gi dibision ‘B’ nu i grupon *Fama’gu’on Oro* ginen Eskuelan Untalan ‘Middle’, dineririhe as Eileen Meno. Gi dibision ‘C’, mangâna i grupon *Ininan i Haggan yan Tuninos* ginen Eskuelan ‘Southern High’, dineririhe as Brian San Nicolas yan Robert Arizala. Siha lakkue gumâna i katigorihan bailan antigu yan komtemporário gi ‘non-divisional’. Dos siha gumâna i uttumu na katigoriha, kontodu i Eskuelan Untalan ‘Middle’ - *Fama’gu’on Oro*.

I otro siha na Kompetensia yan Festibidât durântên i sâkkan kâda sâkkan desde ma’pos-ña na sâkkan, i *Kantan Minagof* gi Mayu diha unu yan dos giya Gef Pâ’go yan Mâyû diha ocho yan nueve giya ‘Guam Reef Hotel’, i *Kosas I Tano Yan I Tasi* gi Septiembre diha dies i ocho yan dies i nueve yan diha bente i singko yan bente i sais, yan nos uttimos i *Estorian I Tano Yan I Tasi* gi Nubembre

Belafonte vs Powell revisited

The Trotter Group, an organization of black columnists, recently received a note from a former journalist who said he was wondering whether the events of the past six months may have caused any one of the “shocked” journalists of last year to rethink their commentaries concerning Harry Belafonte’s critical remarks about Colin Powell. He asked: “Shouldn’t there be an accounting somewhere given the revelation of so much new information?”

It was a fair question. I was one of those who weighed in on Belafonte’s criticism of the secretary of state, coming down firmly on Powell’s side (“Powell’s Mastery,” op-ed, Feb. 8, 2003). I owe an accounting.

For those who may have missed it, five months earlier, in October, experience and sensitive to the importance of maintaining public credibility, would go before a world body and present a case that could later get blown out of the water. No way, I thought.

I was wrong.

But was Harry Belafonte right about Powell? In a word, no.

Belafonte’s harsh criticism of the Bush administration’s foreign and domestic policies was and is certainly fair enough. And his opposition to Bush’s treatment of the international community in the run-up to the Iraq war was warranted. But Belafonte was wrong to suggest that because he disagrees with Powell on Iraq or with George W. Bush on a host of other issues, that Powell is somehow a white man’s tool. It was Belafonte’s use of slurs and his demeaning personal characterization of Powell that struck me as uncalled for and out of bounds.

I have no reason to think that Powell deliberately lied at the United Nations or that he distorted and exaggerated the intelligence on which his testimony was based. But was I wrong

By **FRANCES M. SABLAN**

The views expressed are strictly that of the author. Sablan is the coordinator for the Public School System’s Advanced Development Institute.



diha trese yan katotse yan diha bente yan bente i unu. Todu esti siha na silibrasion yan festibidât ma planuyi gi Sabalu yan Damenggo na ha’âni giya Gef Pâ’go yan Guam Reef Hotel na lugât. Pues mâtka i kalendârión-miyu ya en pattisipao gi esti siha na inetnon.

Manñaonao i grupon Chamorro ginen Saipan gi ma’pos-ña na sâkkan gi 2002 na sâkkan. I grupon *INATUAS, Isa Cultural Dancers, Eskuelan Ilimentârión Dândan* yan i *Napu Pacific Voyagers*. Todu manfina’nâgue as ladefontu Richard Duenas, mâs ma tungo-ña komu si “Buli”. Si Buli yan si Frank Rabon, i “Master Dancer” ginen Guahan, muna’ pusipbli i kareran-ñiha i kuarto na grupu yan un Hues – si Frances M. Sablan.

Si Frank Rabon, i grupon *Taotao Tano*, i inetnon Pâ’a Taotao Tâno’, i Gef Pâ’go, i ‘Hotel’ Accion, ‘Guam Reef Hotel’, ‘Turtle Tours’ yan ‘Guam mass transit’ muna’ pusipbli i lugât, i kuarto, nengkanno’ yan transpottasion i manbisita na grupo siha durântên i kompetensia gi ma’pos-ña yan pâ’go na sâkkan.

I *INATUAS* gumâna dos na katigoriha gi ma’pos-ña na sâkkan gi dibision ‘A’: i antigu yan komtemporário. I *Eskuelan Dandan Ilementário* gumâna i katigorihan Española. I grupon *Isa Cultural Dancers* gumâna i katigorihan Española gi dibision ‘B’ I inetnon Pâ’a Taotao Tâno’ ma establesi gi Nubembre diha sais, 2001 na sâkkan komu ‘non-profit’ na otganisasion para u na lâla’, na taihinekkok yan na mâmta’ i kostumbren i taotao tâno’ gi kanta, baila yan âtte siha. I ufisiâles i inetnon siha: i ‘Chairman’ si Benjamin J. F. Cruz - Ritirao na ‘Chief Justice’, i sigundon i ‘Chairman’ si Joshua Tenorio, i Sikretâria si Doktora Judy Flores - Direktoran Gef Pâ’go giya Inalahan, i Tresurário si Monica Guzman, yan i membron i ‘Board’ siha: si Frances M. Sablan ginen i Nottle Mariñas, si Leonard Iriarte – i dumeririhe i grupon *Guma Pa’lu Li’e*, si Antonia Gumataotao, si Geri Gutierrez - ginen ‘First Lady’, si Therese Arriola, si Lorraine Okada, si Rob Limtiaco, si Leonard Calvo, si Carmen Fernandez – Senadora, yan si Peter Onedera. I Ufisiât Ekseklatibu i inetnon si Linda Taitano Reyes, i ‘Creative Director’ si Frank Rabon, i ufisiât atministrasion si Michele, i mumaneneha i Teknikât na pätte si Dexter Diaz, yan i ayudântên i inetnon si James Mallicoat.

Yanggen maninteresao hamyo manñaonao gi ‘Board’ Pâ’a Taotao Tâno, osino i inetnon komu membron hinerât, âgang i (671) 475-4722 na numeru, i numerun ‘fax’ gi (671) 475-8266, osino e-mail siha gi esti na ‘address’: paa@paa.taotao.tano.com.

Biba inetnon Pâ’a Taotao Tâno’! Biba todû i grupon Chamorro, espesiâtmente i grupon Paraisu!

By **COLBERT I. KING**

The Washington Post

King is a Washington Post op-ed columnist.



to have deferred to the secretary of state because he happened to be Colin Powell? Should I have been more skeptical, less accepting and more willing to listen to Powell’s critics? To each question, the answer is yes.

The only justification for going to war, in my view, was the belief that Saddam Hussein had chemical and biological weapons and that he was going to use them against this country and our allies. Any other administration casus belli paled in significance. It’s sickening to realize that so many lives have been lost and so many billions have been spent on the basis of evidence that turns out to have been so questionable. Yes, it’s time for an accounting.

That said, it doesn’t follow that Powell deserves branding as an Uncle Tom or traitor to his race because of what he did or failed to do on Iraq, either within the high councils of the administration or at the United Nations. There is no “black” and “white” way of looking at Iraq. And if white people can disagree on the best way to handle Iraq—and they do—why can’t black people as well, without public officials such as Powell and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice having their racial cards pulled?

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Student conference awaiting applicants

The 56th Japan-America Student Conference will be held this year from July 21 to Aug. 20, 2004, with the theme “Re-evaluating the Japan-America Relationship: Civic Commitment to Global Issues.”

This year, the 56th JASC will begin when 40 American delegates arrive in Hawaii for the American orientation on July 21. The Japanese delegation will arrive on July 25. After a two-day joint-orientation, both delegations will begin their pursuit of the 56th JASC objectives and the 2004 theme.

The 56th JASC goals include addressing contemporary issues that affect the United States and Japan; exploring the basis for civic commitment and responsibility;

CPA

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million funding assistance for that. It was a totally different strategic study we made and it was approved,” said Salas in an interview.

The executive director said this is the first time CPA applied for the homeland security funding assistance and its next application would come next year. All allotments would be used for security purposes and improvements at all CNMI ports, he said.

Earlier, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security reportedly rejected the CNMI Homeland Security Strategic Plan as prepared and submitted by a private consultant on behalf of the CNMI government in January 2004.

Because of the reported rejection, two ranking officials from the Office of Domestic Preparedness, an agency under the Homeland Security Department, arrived on Saipan reportedly to conduct its own assessment study aimed at verifying several aspects of the CNMI proposal.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta, however, said the report was not rejected at all. He said it only needs “some changes” such as in the area of coordination between agencies.

“It’s not a rejection. It’s not to say that we would not get funding. No, that’s not the case here. It [strategic plan] requires some changes to ensure greater coordination among agencies,” he said.

The over 400-page strategic plan was prepared by Federated Sector Enterprises, whose managing partner is former U.S. Interior official Danny Aranza. FSE had initially signed a \$200,000-contract with the CNMI government to tap into some \$4.5 million federal grant. A contract amendment, which increased the amount to \$400,000, allowed FSE to handle the assessment report preparation.

The CNMI has been allocated \$5.865 million, which would be released as a grant award from the Office of Domestic Preparedness once the CNMI’s homeland security strategy is approved. The CNMI should get its significant federal funding by April or May 2004.

If approved, the CNMI would be in a stronger position to access a wide variety of homeland security programs from the Transportation Security Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the departments of Homeland Security, Energy, Agriculture, Justice, and Health and Human Services, among others.

cultivating mutual understanding; seeking viable means of reform to pertinent issues; forming meaningful friendships; creating cultural appreciation and sensitivity; promoting lifelong learning; and fostering student leadership.

American delegates will be selected from all fields of study and will range from 1st year college students to Ph.D. candidates. Delegates need not be Asian studies majors or studying Japanese language because English is the primary language of the conference.

While U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status is preferred, the only eligibility requirement is full-time student standing. Each applicant will be asked to submit short answer essays, an autobiographical essay, a writing sample, a current transcript and letters of recommendation. Upon selection, delegates will prepare a roundtable-related presentation prior to the conference.

For the 56th JASC, the participation fee is \$2,000, which covers all food, lodging and group travel for the duration of the conference. Travel between each conference location is included in this fee. Roundtrip domestic transportation to the American Orientation site, Honolulu, and from the final destination, Princeton, NJ, is the responsibility of the individual delegate.

Organizers pointed out, though, that each year a considerable number of

delegates—80 percent of American delegates for the 55th JASC— receive full or partial financial support from their universities or other organizations.

Upon selection, JASC Inc. and the American Executive Committee can provide advice for locating and obtaining scholarships and financial aid.

Applications for the 56th JASC must be postmarked by March 1, 2004. Applications may be printed from the website at www.jasc.org/.

This year also marks the 70th anniversary of JASC. In commemoration of this special year, an alumni reunion will take place the weekend of July 29-August 2 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

During the alumni reunion, the year’s delegation will exchange views with a wide variety of accomplished alumni from both the U.S. and Japan.

The conference will then begin its schedule of traveling to four American cities over the course of four weeks during which the students will engage in academic roundtable discussions, cultural and social events, lectures and panel presentations, fieldtrips and 70th anniversary celebrations with alumni from across the U.S. and Japan.

The tour schedule is:

July 21-Aug. 1	East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii
July 21-24	American Orientation

July 29-Aug. 2
Aug. 2-4

Aug. 5-11

Aug. 12-20

Alumni Reunion
Mills College, San Francisco, Calif & Homestay
George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

JASC said these experiences will provide a foundation for mutual understanding and social awareness, cultural sensitivity, and an academic challenge of ideas.

“More importantly, the bonds that will form as a result of the 80 students living and working together will offer the basis for life-long friendships that will further strengthen the ties between Japan and the United States,” the organizers said in a statement.

Delegates will serve on one of the eight Roundtables, each of which is related to the 56th JASC theme. As members of a roundtable, delegates will participate in frequent table meetings that last from one to three hours. During these table sessions, delegates will engage in active discussions, field trips, lectures, and panel presentations that focus on their respective Table Topics.

The specific approach taken to each roundtable will be decided by the delegates upon arrival to the conference.

Polls to open Friday for RP elections

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General disclosed that polling places for over 7,000 registered Filipino voters would be open beginning Friday for the Philippine presidential and national elections.

Philippine Consul General Wilfredo Maximo said the polling places would be at the consulate’s

office at the 5th Floor of the Nauru Building in Susupe beginning March 12.

From April 11 until the last day to vote on May 10, Maximo said the polling places would be at the ground floor of the Nauru Building. He said the consulate would make available bigger polling places to accommodate land-based Filipino absentee voters by this time.

From March 12, to April 10, only Filipino seafarers may cast their ballots

at the polling places. Beginning April 11, the polling places would be available for land-based Filipino absentee voters staying in the CNMI.

There are 7,022 Filipino workers in the CNMI who registered as absentee voters pursuant to a new Philippine law allowing its citizens working abroad to participate in its elections. Maximo said 30 of these are seafarers, while most of the registered voters are land-based workers.

DUPED

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governor’s conference room to hear their concerns.

The administration also brought in Chinese Economic Development Association President Wang Pei Wen, whom the Chinese government has appointed as liaison between China and the CNMI.

Salas, in an interview with reporters later, confirmed the students have expressed a desire to go home to China.

“According to them, everything is so expensive in Saipan as compared to China—food, housing, everything. And they don’t want to work; they just want to go home,” Salas quoted the students as saying.

He said the Labor Department has received 59 applications for temporary work authorizations from former SU students, of which 10 have been approved. Some 26 applications are said

to be pending due to deficiencies in requirements while 13 more applications have been cancelled. Another 10 are under study.

“There were 108 of them initially. But now there’s 88 of them, 20 have left... We’ve explained to them that it’s very difficult for the government to release any funds, reimburse anybody until this investigation is put to a finality,” said Salas.

“Mr. Park and the recruiters are to be blamed for this. They are the ones that victimized these students. These students are innocent but they were victimized by a very bad person,” he added.

The Labor official assured that the CNMI government is taking every step to resolve the issue, noting actions being undertaken by different government agencies.

Salas said he personally prefers it if the students return to China and await the resolution of their cases there. He

guaranteed that the CEDA, through Wen, would be on hand for them to contact in following up their cases.

“They do have plane tickets.... They can leave anytime and they can always get in contact with Mr. Wen and let them know what’s happening to their case. Mr. Wen is here assuring them that they are talking to the Chinese Consulate in LA. So we can easily track them down and give them whatever money we can recover from Mr. Park and the recruiters... It’s a difficult matter. They have spent so much money coming into the islands,” said Salas, noting that some students shelled out as much as \$15,000 to study at SU.

“The administration is working tirelessly to try to resolve this issue. Mr. Park is in prison, so that’s a true indication that we’re trying our best,” he added.

Salas said that, although the money will eventually be returned to the students, the process is going to take months pending thorough investigation.

California), and Joe Baca (D-California), attended the committee hearing.

The congressional hearing happened after the January visit by Pombo and other members of the Resources Committee to the CNMI.

CNMI lawmakers such as senators Luis P. Crisostomo, Thomas P.

Villagomez, Joseph M. Mendiola, and Henry H. San Nicolas, and CNMI Rep. Janet U. Maratita also flew to Washington D.C. to attend the hearing. The CNMI House of Representatives had passed a resolution asking Congress to grant the Commonwealth a delegate seat in the U.S. House.

IMPROVE

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management controls over the federal grants process.

“Although federal grants are a major source of revenue in the CNMI, the CNMI government has no centralized control over the processing of federal grants,” said Sablan in a five-page letter to House Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations chairman Clyde Norita.

Sablan made the recommendation in response to a request by former Rep. William S. Torres, who was chairman of the same committee in the 13th Legislature.

The public auditor noted that because of the lack of centralized control, CNMI agencies might have difficulty planning, implementing, monitoring and accounting for federal grant activities. This, according to Sablan, may have limited agencies’ access to available federal grant awards.

In its review, OPA evaluated the federal grants processes of the Public School System, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Finance and Office of Management and Budget.

OPA found that because of lack of guidance in the grant applications process and its accounting, federal grants program may not be achieving all it could.

The agency also noted that OMB and DoF have no written procedures addressing the grant award process of grant expenditure and reporting process to account for federal funds provided.

Also, OPA observed that while OMB receives, distributes and files applications for various agencies, it is not tasked with assessing program effectiveness.

OMB, however, has reportedly taken the initiative to develop a database to help monitor the program.

In addition, OPA determined that DoF does not always reconcile federal grant account balances, causing accounting records to not always accurately reflect amounts actually due the CNMI.

“While DoF carried forward substantial accounts receivable amounts, reimbursements from grantor agencies were received, but were incorrectly recorded,” OPA found.

To correct the existing situation, Sablan suggested that the CNMI government compare its management controls with an organization known to follow an exemplary federal grants process. This way, OPA said, the CNMI can learn and improve its program, including its management structure and internal controls.

He recommended that the government also finish the development of its database to document and monitor grant activity during the application phase.

The government has also been advised to develop written procedures for all agencies engaged in the federal grants process to help prevent the confusion of responsibility and accountability over grant activity.

Lastly, OPA suggested that the government reconcile all outstanding federal grant account receivables and deferred revenues in its financial management system and remove any amounts determined to have resulted from a recording error. (*Marian A. Maraya*)

CTC asked to expedite Verizon sale



Mayor Francisco Borja, center, is joined by members of Tinian's senatorial delegation, congressman and municipal council members in a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New pavilions inaugurated on Tinian

Tinian Mayor Francisco M. Borja, along with dignitaries from Tinian's senatorial delegation, municipal council and congressman, cut the ribbon to officially open for use the newly built pavilions near the island's Suicide Cliff area.

The pavilions command a beautiful view of the ocean. An area also has been added for visitors to safely look over

the cliff and to do some turtle watching, which many have found to be in abundance at the location.

The site adds to the many locations on Tinian where residents and visitors can go to have a picnic with friends and family or to just hang out in the area, which is known for its tranquil surroundings.

The pavilions are part of the

many projects that Borja has accomplished and is still planning for the island of Tinian.

Special thanks are extended to George Borja, supervisor of the men and women of the Special Projects division for the Tinian Mayor's Office for the completion of the project and all the good people who made this project possible. *(Joey C. Charfauros)*

Veterans expected for Iwo Jima trek

More than 100 veterans are scheduled to arrive on Guam this week to participate in what has become an annual trek to the Japanese island of Iwo Jima—site of one of the most memorable battles in U.S. military history.

It was atop Iwo Jima's Mount Suribachi on Feb. 23, 1945, that photographer Joe Rosenthal took the Pulitzer-prize-winning photo of U.S. Marines and a Navy Corpsman raising a large U.S. flag. That was on the third day after U.S. Marines invaded the island, in a battle that lasted more than

a month and which cost 28,000 lives on both sides.

The United States wanted to capture Iwo Jima—which is halfway between Guam and the main islands of Japan—to prevent the Japanese from using the island as a base to launch fighter planes against U.S. bombers. The U.S. military wanted to use the island as a base for its own fighter planes, in order to provide uninterrupted escort to and from Japan.

Military Historical Tours, which arranges historic tours of battle sites

around the world, organized this year's visit, with the assistance of the U.S. Marine Corps, which will help shuttle visitors during their day on Iwo Jima.

About 30 veterans were scheduled to arrive on Saipan Sunday night, to tour Saipan and Tinian for a couple of days. About 80 other veterans were expected to arrive on Guam yesterday, and the entire group is scheduled to fly to Iwo Jima Friday morning on a chartered Continental Airlines flight.

This year is the 59th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima. *(PDN/PIR)*

ANGEL WINGS RESTAURANT

Keeping Saipan company for 8 years

For eight years, the Angel Wings restaurant and karaoke bar in Garapan has remained awake whenever nighttime falls, catering to those who want to belt out their singing talents within a homey ambiance.

Businessman Manny Parayno also attributed the establishment's survival to quality food and drinks at more affordable prices compared to those of its competitors.

Angel Wings opens daily from 6pm

to 2am, said Parayno. The restaurant and bar offers fresh seafood from the Philippines, including the favorite *sugpo* or prawns prepared in tamarind soup. Among other favorites at Angel Wings are the *bulalo* soup, *lomi* noodles, *sisig* and crispy pata.

Parayno said the lomi is perfect for alcohol drinkers to remain sober, with servings enough to satisfy three to four persons. Each serving is reasonably priced at \$5, he said.

The establishment's bar offers mixed drinks and beer. For those who get a 100-point score on the karaoke machine will get a free tequila shot.

Since recently, Angel Wings has launched its Ladies Nights on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Parayno also said he is negotiating with beer wholesalers for promotional tie-ups very soon.

Angel Wings is located across the Micro Beach Hotel in Garapan.

The House of Representatives yesterday adopted a joint resolution asking the Commonwealth Telecommunication Commission to speed up the sale of telecommunications provider Verizon to an off-island buyer.

House Joint Resolution 14-9, which now goes to the Senate for action, essentially offers support for Pacific Telecom Inc.'s bid to purchase the CNMI's local exchange carrier.

The measure, sponsored by Vice Speaker Timothy P. Villagomez, pointed out that the Federal Communications Commission on Nov. 6, 2003 granted conditional approval for the transfer of control of Verizon to PTI.

It further noted that on Nov. 14, 2003, 71 Verizon employees signed and filed a petition before CTC supporting the sale of Verizon to PTI.

House members, in unanimously adopting the resolution, expressed confidence that PTI's purchase of

Verizon is in the best interest of all telecommunications consumers in the Commonwealth.

The lawmakers are counting on PTI to fulfill its expressed commitment to, among others, provide job security for all current Verizon employees, and keep the prices of its products and services competitively affordable.

In addition, PTI vowed to retain the same organizational structure currently in existence, except with the addition of a chief executive officer.

The firm also pledged to strive toward achieving superior customer service through a variety of customer care improvements and strategies, and enhance employees' skills and productivity.

PTI has also promised to increase the overall penetration rates in the CNMI by ensuring that customers understand the benefits and subsidies available to them. *(Marian A. Maraya)*

NMC's honor society supports local schools

The Beta Lambda Psi Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Academic Honor Society at the Northern Marianas College had its first community service activity for the semester with the holding of a book drive project for the benefit of a local Saipan high school.

The book drive project collected about 15 boxes of books from staff and students at NMC, which would be donated to Saipan Southern High School's new library, courtesy of members and advisors of Phi Theta Kappa.

The donated books included a large variety of reference books, among them math, science and social studies, art, and business books. Saipan Southern High School principal Peter La'au and school librarian Evita Maritita accepted the donation.

Two years ago, a similar NMC book drive provided the newly opened Kagman High School with a large number of books for its library.

"A big thank you goes to the NMC's student, staff, faculty, and bookstore for

their generous donations, which made this book drive such a success. Special appreciation for help in sorting, boxing and transporting the books to SHS is extended to PTK members Jack Kiyoshi, Shahzad (Judd) Chaudhry and Zhi Yu Liang, and to the PTK advisors, Eleanor Cabrera, Debra Cabrera, Eleanor Cabrera, and Angie Sills," the project proponents said in a media release.

PTK also has lined up among its community service projects this semester participation in the upcoming Red Cross walkathon on March 27th, and also in the International PTK Project Graduation where over a thousand PTK chapters worldwide will lend support for the "Feed the Body—Feed the Mind Project" during their college graduation.

In Project Graduation, members will solicit nonperishable food items and children's books from everyone who attends NMC's spring graduation, which would then be donated for Karidat programs. *(Shahzad Chaudhry)*

MILESTONES

Benavente passes GED test

Frank Sablan Benavente has passed his GED test and will be awarded his diploma. He is now actively preparing to enter the Northern Marianas College starting Spring 2004.

Benavente was recently notified of his passing the test.

"The reason why I quit school was because I was overage and had not accumulated enough credits in high school. I was able to find a job as a gas attendant and I realized that it wasn't going to get me anywhere," according to Benavente.

He said he decided to get serious about the GED Program last year, motivated by his oldest sister who had graduated from Advance Development Institute.



"Now there are two of us out of six siblings who have received a diploma. This makes me very proud since I am next to the youngest. Now I am making preparations and have submitted my application to enter the Northern Marianas College," said Benavente.

Pacific

PNG province confirms 446 AIDS cases

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (The National/PIR)—There are more than 400 confirmed cases of AIDS/HIV cases in Eastern Highlands province as of Dec 2003.

Eastern Highlands Provincial AIDS Council (PAC) and provincial disease control office revealed this yesterday in Goroka.

PAC coordinator Sam Touilly and provincial disease controller Jackson Apo said AIDS has been

increasing rapidly at a rate of 60 confirmed cases per quarter in the past five years.

They said the disease was first detected in the province in 1990 and has already grown roots with 446 confirmed fully blown cases.

Mr Touilly said for every HIV infected person, there are at least 10 people that the victim goes around with.

"From this frightening ratio, it could be estimated that there

are around 4,000 HIV positives in the province," Touilly said.

"The figure released is only for those reported at the clinics but it is believed that there is a similar number for unreported cases," they said.

Mr Touilly and Mr Apo said the most affected age groups are between 25 and 35, the sexually productive and active age group.

They, however, said that AID/HIV is also affecting all other age groups. They urged

everyone to take stock of their conducts in social gatherings.

Mr Touilly also stressed a similar message this week at the opening of Medical Ambassadors International (MAI) training for district health coordinators at Orobiga outside, Goroka town.

MAI's Pacific region area coordinators, Bill and Sharon Bieber, conducted the one-week training.

Mr Touilly said he wondered what the situation would be like

in 10 years if there were no attempts to combat the spread of the deadly disease.

He said the Provincial Aids Council and the National AIDS Council have a huge task to combat the spread of the disease.

Mr Touilly said they could not fight the epidemic alone.

"We need good networking and multi-sectoral approach from every stakeholder and citizen to fight the spread of the disease because it is now

becoming the leading cause of death in PNG," Touilly said.

He highlighted that poverty, domestic violence, unemployment, economic disparity, law and order problems, and lack of education are some of the contributing factors towards the fast growth of the epidemic.

The training was aimed at preparing district trainers to teach the people in the districts about methods of preventing the spread of HIV virus.



MACABRE SEARCH

Police boats search the Crocodile infested Adelaide river, 70 kilometers southwest of the northern city of Darwin, Australia Wednesday, March 3, 2004, after two bodies, believed to be of Thai prostitutes, were found Wednesday by staff on two crocodile spotting boats on the river. The two women, aged 27 and 58, drowned after being thrown separately into the river's muddy waters with their legs tied together.

AP

Report: Religious freedom crimped in Samoa

PAGOPAGO, American Samoa (Samoa News/PIR)—A recent U.S. State Department report on international human rights says that while freedom of religion exists in Samoa, in practice it is the matai that often chooses the religious denomination for the extended family.

The document, called "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2003" was released two weeks ago by the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human rights and Labor.

The report looks at human right issues around the world and it includes Samoa. Certain

provision on the Samoa report talks about freedom of religion - an issue in which village residents were banished by the chief council for disobeying the village rule of accepting only certain religious denominations.

The federal report notes that Samoa's Constitution grants each person the right to change religion or belief and to worship or teach religion alone or with others.

"However, in practice," the report says, "the matai often chooses the religious denomination of the extended family."

Despite the constitutional protection, the report points out

past village council practice in which sometimes people are banished from the village or families are punished for not adhering to the prevailing religious belief in the village.

The report said such banishment or punishments are "in the name of maintaining social harmony within the village".

The banishment, however, are overturned by civil courts, that take precedence over village councils in matter involving constitutional rights and the courts in past have ordered families re-admitted to their villages.

Concerns raised over Solomons logging

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (SIBC/PIR)—The Conservation Division of the Ministry of Forestry, Environment and Conservation is concerned about the number of logging companies operating in the Isabel Province.

Senior Conservation Officer Nathaniel Dawea said the rate of log extraction and the number of logging companies operating on Isabel is posing threats to any conservation efforts.

He adds that Isabel and

Choiseul Provinces are attractive because their topography is unlike those of Guadalcanal and Makira.

The senior conservation officer says the latter Provinces have very rugged terrains and are regarded by logging companies as unprofitable.

Mr Dawea adds as such, they would allow for conservation projects.

He raised the concerns while commenting on new approaches made by the U.S.-based

Conservation International in devolving its functions to representatives on the ground to recommend the way programs and projects should move.

In the past, CI has controlled the way programs were run from their Washington base.

He also says CI is concentrating its conservation efforts on Makira-Ulawa Province until such time they are successful and then emulate those projects on other Provinces.



Another top cop arrested in Solomons

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—A second Solomon Islands Deputy Police Commissioner, Wilfred Akao, has been arrested in Honiara.

He was detained by regional assistance mission police working with Professional Standards Investigators.

Akao has been charged with abduction, intimidation and making false claims as an official.

He appeared in court in Honiara over the weekend and has been granted bail.

Last week, Deputy Police Commissioner, John Homelo, was arrested and charged with one count of abuse of office and five of falsifying claims.

Solomon's police have also arrested the partner of the former Malaita militant commander, Jimmy Rasta Lusiba'ea.

Vika Koto now faces two murder charges.

The arrest of Ms Koto brings to six the number of people arrested and charged in relation to the murders to two special constables in January 2002.

Marshalls approve Oregon adoption agency

MAJURO, Marshall Islands (Yokwe Online/PIR)—The Central Adoption Authority of the Republic of the Marshall Islands has licensed a single agency to facilitate international adoptions between the Marshall Islands and the United States.

The Hillsborough, Oregon agency, Journeys of the Heart, was licensed on March 1. According to the RMI, the agency, headed by executive director Susan Tompkins, has demonstrated a history of ethical dealing, respect for the Marshallese culture, and utmost competence in dealing with complex international adoptions.

It was the only agency among the applicants to be accredited under the Hague Convention.

U.S. families interested in adopting a Marshallese child are required to work through this agency only.

Australia earmarks \$17 million for Nauru

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (RNZI/PIR)—Australia says it will provide Nauru with a secretary of finance and may also appoint a police commissioner.

This is part of a new arrangement under which Australia says it is to provide Nauru with US\$17 million to help stabilize the country's economy and strengthen law and order.

The foreign minister Alexander Downer says the development assistance is part of a new memorandum of understanding signed with Nauru, which hosts a detention center for asylum seekers Australia refuses to process on its own territory.

The minister says the memorandum of understanding is effective until June 2005 and signals an increased level of co-operation between the two countries.

Global risk officer denies Fiji slur

SUVA, Fiji (Fijilive/PIR)—Global Risk Strategies local agent Col. Sakiusa Raivoce slammed a Fiji Sun newspaper story that reported him saying disgruntled employees should become prostitutes.

Raivoce categorically denied the statement, published in the Sun on Tuesday 2 March.

The story says Raivoce said that disgruntled employees should resign and work as prostitutes on Suva's Stinson Parade and would gain more by standing on Thomson St. after 10 p.m.

Global Risk Strategies is a British company that employs mercenaries for security missions around the world. Several hundred Fiji soldiers are currently working for the firm in Iraq.

The Sun quoted Raivoce as saying "there is a growing demand in that market they'd probably get more overtime for it."

A recent batch of Fiji guards have renewed their contracts to work in Iraq despite claims by some former employees that they have not received all their pay.

New arrest in 2002 Solomons murder

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (SIBC/PIR)—Police have arrested the partner of former Malaita militant commander, Jimmy Rasta Lusiba'ea and charged her with two counts of murder.

The office of the RAMSI special coordinator confirms that today the Participating Police Force national investigations team arrested Vika Koto on the Kukum Highway.

The arrest came as a result of investigations into the murders of the two special constables Hudson Hati and Max Ula at Ranadi, east Honiara in January 26, 2002.

The arrest of Ms Koto brings to six the total number of people arrested and held in relation to the matter.

Ms Koto appeared before the Honiara Magistrates Court this afternoon, and was remanded in custody to re-appear on March 19.

Her partner former Malaita militant commander Lusiba'ea is also facing a various charges including murder charges relating to the death of the two special constables.

Rasta is being held in custody since his arrest late last year.

Business

How much is enough for retirement?

By ABIGAIL TRAFFORD
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—An e-mail message from a reader pops up on the screen: "I'm told I need 1.5 million dollars to retire." The sender is 37 and he's already worried that he won't have enough.

When people talk about retirement planning, they mostly focus on financial planning: How much do you need to live out 20, 30, 40 years? Can you afford retirement?

But this line of questioning is backward. To be sure, economic security is a huge factor in My Time, that unprecedented period of vitality that comes after middle age but before old age. But just as important are the psychological and social assets that you've been building up over a lifetime. How do you pool all of these resources to support a new life?

Money is part of the equation. But the real question is more fundamental: What are you going to do in this new stage in the life cycle? The conundrum of "what next" has to be addressed before you can really resolve the question of "how much."

Martha Moffett of Lake Worth, Fla., has found her answer. "I call it 'just enough,'" she says.

Two years ago, Moffett retired from her library job at a publishing company where she earned about \$57,000 plus benefits. A single mom, she had raised three daughters and worked at the company for 25 years. Before her retirement, she kept track of what she spent and estimated what she would need to cover living expenses. "It's a modest amount," says Moffett, 70.

Today she lives on about \$35,000, including Social Security and a retirement annuity. "I've found what 'just enough' is for me. But when I tell my friends who are still

working about this, they look at me as if I'm crazy. They think there is no 'just enough.'"

Each of us has to figure out our "just-enough" level. It's finding a balance between what you have and what you need to take advantage of these bonus decades—whether that's starting a business, performing community service, caring for others, learning to dance or finding another job.

Some financial burdens are eased at this stage. Moffett's children are grown. Her taxes are lower. Her car is paid off. She's refinanced her house and cut back on expenses associated with working—commuting, dressing a certain way, eating out.

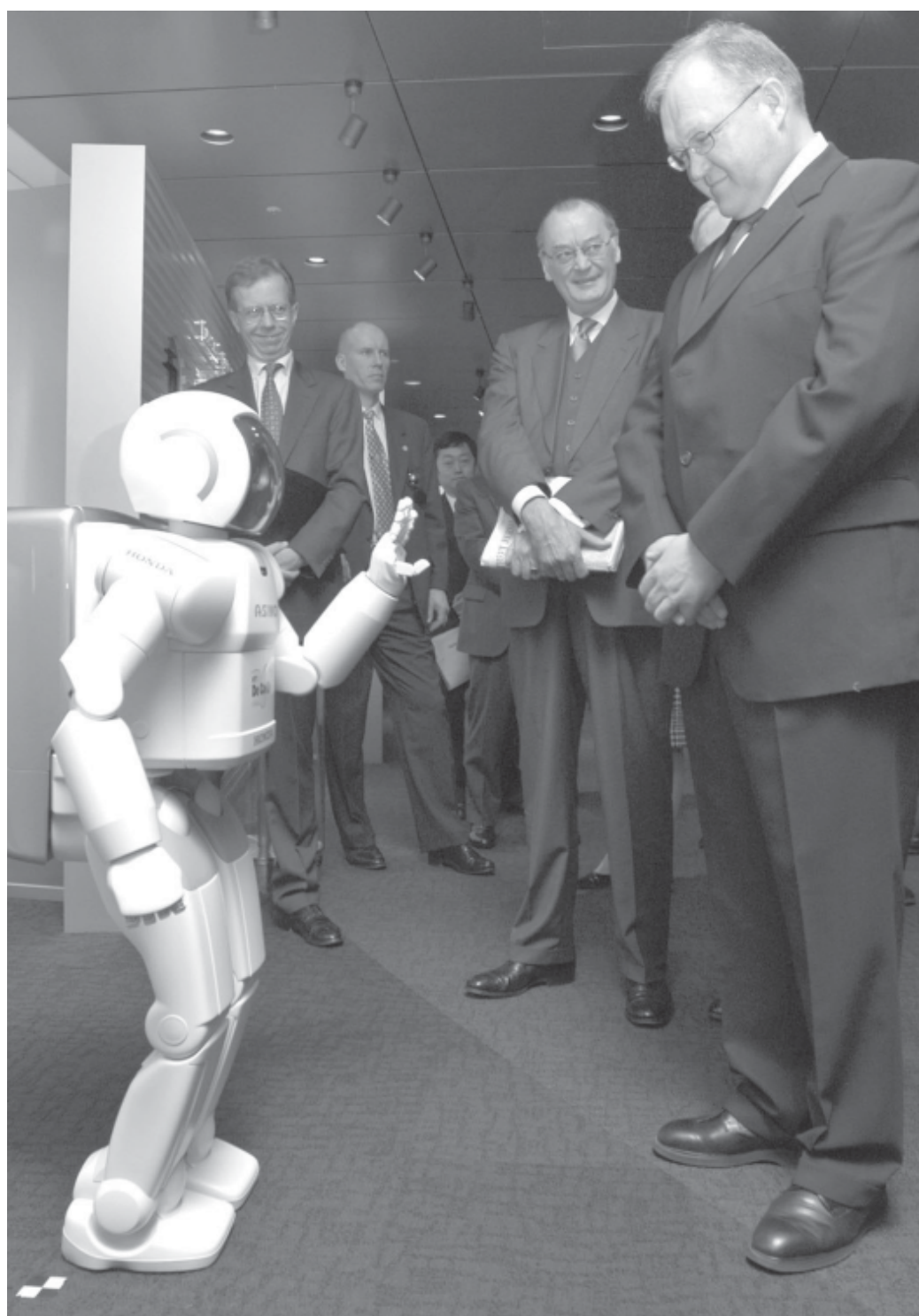
All this allows her to pursue her creative talents. She's attended writing workshops and gotten involved in a community theater. She's written 160 pages of a novel that she hopes to finish this summer. She's had time to visit her grandchildren, who are spread out from California to England.

"I was far short of having a million whatever at the end of my working life," she says. But since retirement, "I've felt comfortable and secure."

She has Medicare, "which is great," she says. "My doctors like it so much. The billing is simple for them."

Social Security brings her about \$18,000 a year. "That's a nice base to build on," she says.

Yet focusing solely on money may also be a form of denial. It can lead you to tell yourself: I can't afford to leave this job. I won't even think about it. If you fix on a dollar amount, it's never enough. But once Moffett found her "just enough," she felt a sense of liberation. "I think 'liberating' is a great word. It's been a revelation to me," she says. "It releases me to think about other things and live every day in a more comfortable way."



KONICHIWA, PRESSON-SAN!

Honda's humanoid robot Asimo greets Swedish Prime Minister Goran Presson, right, as the prime minister tours a showroom of NTT DoCoMo, Japan's largest mobile phone carrier, in Tokyo Monday, March 8, 2004. Presson, currently on a business visit to Tokyo, examined NTT DoCoMo's latest models of mobile phones.

AP

Company seeks to put ads on school buses

PITTSBURGH (AP)—On the outside, school buses will be just as yellow as they've always been. But if Brian Ungar has his way, the insides will be filled with a dozen or more colorful advertisements promoting colleges, touting toothpaste and warning against using drugs.

Ungar, the founder of InSight Media of White Oak, Pa., has approached 42 area school districts about putting 11-by-25 inch vinyl advertisements above the windows inside school buses. School officials would have discretion over what ads are appropriate, and get as much as 40 percent of the gross revenue from the ads.

"They generate revenue through the advertising that could help offset operating costs and fund educational programs. We're not talking about a little money, we're talking about a lot of money, actually," Ungar said. He would like to see about 15 ads per bus, each of which would cost about \$30 a month.

Advertising in schools is not new, although the idea of putting ads in buses has gained momentum in only the last few years, said Jennifer Dounay, a policy analyst with the Education Commission of the States. Some states leave the decision on whether to allow bus ads up to individual districts. Others have state laws allowing it and mandating the ads be age-appropriate, according to an ECS report.

In Massachusetts, a 2002 law cleared the way for school-bus advertising, while prohibiting liquor, tobacco, drugs and gambling ads. The ads can be placed on the exterior of the buses, but can't take up more than one-quarter of the bus.

A couple of districts there have placed ads on buses as a result. The Braintree district has a \$30,000 contract with a restaurant chain, and the Beverly district made \$36,000 last year by selling ad space to local businesses, including a health club and real estate companies.

Figuring out complex capital-gains rates

NEW YORK (AP)—Figuring out capital-gains rates is going to be a mind-bending exercise this year. Taxpayers will benefit from a smaller hit on long-term profits, but to get that smaller hit, they'll have to wade through up to eight different rates for 2003.

As always, you'll have to account separately for short-term and long-term capital gains, but this year, you'll also have to apply a five-month cutoff to certain profits. Ordinary income-tax rates may be part of the equation, and on top of that, sales of art as well as certain investment property will have to be calculated separately.

The Internal Revenue Service's Schedule D—the tax form used to report capital gains and losses—runs 53 lines for 2003, compared with 40 lines the year before, and the instruction manual that comes with it is 11 pages.

Taxpayers may also need to consult IRS Publication 544, "Sales and Other Dispositions of Assets," Publication 550, "Investment Income and Expenses," and Publication 564,

"Mutual Fund Distributions," for more information about changes.

"I expect more mistakes and tax returns to be wrong" because people will apply the wrong rates this year, said Mark Luscombe, principal analyst at tax publisher CCH Inc. in Riverwoods, Ill.

If the changes are too daunting to manage alone, now might be a good time to find a professional or to buy some tax-preparation software.

Don't know where to get started? First, gather all your 1099 forms and trade-confirmation slips. Make a note of the date you purchased the equity or asset and your cost basis, then separate out short-term and long-term gains. Within these piles, classify the gains as those realized after May 5, and stock sold before that. This will help you apply the right rates when filling out Schedule D.

It pays to be organized. If your accountant does your taxes, and charges by the hour, "you're going to pay for it if that person has to spend an extra hour sorting

through your stuff," said Jackie Perlman, a senior tax research analyst at H&R Block.

If you're preparing returns yourself, here's a breakdown of the rules.

Stockholders who realized long-term gains after May 5, 2003, qualify for the lower top rate of 15 percent, or if they're in the lowest income brackets, of 5 percent. But those who sold before this time would still be subject to higher rates of 20 percent and 10 percent.

Additionally, if the stock was held a year or less, then ordinary income-tax rates—instead of the lower capital-gains rate—would apply. The good news is that last year's tax cut brought down the maximum income-tax rate to 35 percent from 38.6 percent. On the long end, if you've held the stock for more than five years, you may be eligible for an 8 percent tax rate.

One aspect of capital-gains taxes that has remained constant: The 28 percent tax rate on profits from collectibles including art, stamps and coin collections.

Nation

Md. orders poultry killed due to bird flu

POCOMOKE CITY, Md. (AP)—The discovery of avian influenza in Maryland compelled agriculture officials to order the slaughter of 328,000 birds on two huge commercial chicken farms, nearly four times the number killed when two Delaware farms were infected last month.

The cases in Delaware and on Maryland's Eastern Shore are from the same H7 strain, which

is not harmful to humans, authorities said Sunday.

Maryland agriculture officials confirmed Saturday that a farm with about 118,000 chickens was infected. They ordered the slaughter of those birds, as well as 210,000 others at another farm about a mile away under the same ownership. The slaughter began Sunday and was expected to take until Tuesday.

Agriculture officials also ordered a quarantine that covers eight farms within a two-mile radius of the infected farm, which grows chickens on a contract basis for Mountaire Farms of Selbyville, Del. The department also began testing 79 poultry farms within a six-mile radius.

The infected farm in Worcester County is about 45 miles from the nearest infected

farm in Delaware. Authorities said they had not discovered a connection between the cases, but could not rule out any relation.

Officials emphasized the strain of the virus is not a threat to humans, but it can wipe out poultry farms, especially if it turns up in a highly pathogenic form.

"It is discouraging, and it's surprising to us," Maryland

Agriculture Secretary Lewis Riley, said Sunday at a news conference near the infected farm in Pocomoke City. "We're ready, and we're prepared to address it and to handle it."

The flu case dimmed hopes that international markets banning U.S. poultry would drop their embargoes. Those with a block on imports include the 15-nation European Union,

China, Japan, Mexico, Russia and South Korea.

A different, more dangerous avian influenza strain has killed some 100 million birds in Asia and has been blamed for the deaths of more than 20 people in Vietnam and Thailand.

Also on Sunday, Riley tightened a statewide ban on moving, gathering or selling live birds.

3 still missing from Baltimore water taxi



The water taxi that overturned in a sudden storm Saturday is seen after being uprighted by a crane Sunday, March 7, 2004, in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. AP

BALTIMORE (AP)—The Navy reservists whose quick work saved 21 people aboard a water taxi that capsized described the horrific scene in which they made their rescue: survivors clinging to the overturned vessel in frigid, choppy water pounded by rain, telling them more were trapped below.

One woman was killed in Saturday's accident in Baltimore Harbor and three people, including a child, were missing, but the reservists said Sunday they were relieved the loss of life wasn't even greater.

The sailors rushed to the scene after seeing the boat in trouble. After passengers clinging to the water taxi told them others were trapped underneath, the rescuers used a ramp on their troop landing ship to lift the water taxi partly out of the water, Petty Officer Jeffrey King said.

Water temperatures were in the low 40s, and heavy rain was pouring from black clouds

as survivors were pulled out of the water.

Two people, including an 8-year-old girl, were critically injured when the 36-foot pontoon boat overturned with 23 passengers and two crew members.

The ferry had just set off across the harbor from historic Fort McHenry on the way to the city's Fells Point when it was caught by wind gusting to 50 mph. The boat, which was at full capacity, was equipped with life preservers but passengers are not required to wear them.

"No one on the craft had time to get their life preservers on," said police Maj. Fred Bealefeld.

Twenty-two people were removed from the water but one woman died at a hospital. Seven remained hospitalized Sunday. The water temperature was in the low 40s.

The missing were a man, a woman and a child, said Baltimore Fire Chief William Goodwin.

Kerry says Bush stalling Iraq, 9/11 probes

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—John Kerry on Sunday accused President Bush of "stonewalling" separate inquiries into the events leading up to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists attacks, as well as into the intelligence that suggested Saddam Hussein was hiding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Kerry, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, parried complaints by members of a federal commission investigating the attacks that Bush was resisting their efforts to get documents and question witnesses.

"Why is this administration stonewalling and resisting the investigation into what happened and why we had the greatest security failure in the history of our country?" Kerry said at a hastily arranged news conference.

NY lawmaker scores Muslim leaders

NEW YORK (AP)—Leaders of 85 percent of the nation's mosques are involved in terrorist activities, and some have made irresponsible statements about the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, said Rep. Peter King, a Long Island Republican.

"I don't see any need to be politically correct here—the stakes are too high," King said in an interview broadcast Sunday on WNBC-TV's "News Forum."

The 85 percent figure was drawn from research done for his recently published novel, "Vale of Tears," about the World Trade Center attacks, King said.

"The American people deserve an answer now," Kerry said. "The immediate instinct of the Republicans and this administration was to shut it down."

Kerry, who is moving to

challenge Bush on that front, said the public deserves an answer as soon as possible about what went wrong leading up to the attacks, which killed nearly 3,000 people in New York,

Muslim groups on Long Island have denounced the claim, accusing him of fanning anti-Muslim sentiment to sell books.

King denied that charge. He said leaders of the mosque in Westbury, N.Y. had tried to pass blame for the attacks on a Zionist conspiracy and had not cooperated with law enforcement officers investigating potential terrorist activities.

"When I have police telling me the Muslim community is not coming forward and cooperating, I have a responsibility to speak out. The Muslim leaders have to be more responsible and there should be new leadership," he said.

Washington and Pennsylvania.

"Nothing could be more important to the American people at this moment," he said. "They need to know why we had such a failure of intelligence."

BOE

AP: Parole violators crowd Calif. prisons



'STAY HOME'

An overloaded vessel full of Haitian migrants attempting to leave Haiti is seen at sea near their nation's coast before being helped by the U.S. Coast Guard Valiant in February 2004. Sea and air patrols have been stepped up since President Bush on Feb. 25 urged Haitians to "stay home" and warned anyone who did not would be repatriated.

By BOB PORTERFIELD
AP WRITER

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—California has a take-all-prisoners approach to ex-convicts, a policy so tough that more than half the inmates in state prisons are behind bars for violating parole, an Associated Press analysis has found.

More than 82 percent of these returned parolees are sent back to prison for less than a year, serving new sentences for such minor violations as being drunk in public, driving more than 50 miles from home or driving with a suspended license.

The policy has proven costly for state taxpayers—returning so many parolees for such short sentences accounts for more than 20 percent of California's prison spending, which has cost \$1.58 billion over the past five years, the AP found.

The percentage of parolees in the state's prisons is 10 times higher than that of Texas, which has nearly as many inmates as California. According to a 2002 study by the Urban Institute's Justice Policy Center, California accounts for 42 percent of all parole violators returned to state prisons in the United States.

Prison officials justify the huge number of parole revocations as a means of taking dangerous ex-cons off the streets. But the practice is increasingly criticized as wasteful and ineffective, especially for nonviolent offenders struggling to become productive members of society.

California settled a class-action lawsuit late last year that will add legal protections for parolees in hearings and substitute substance abuse treatment for prison sentences in some cases. And the Legislature is likely to take reforms further, given mounting budget overruns.

"We've got to solve the parole problem before we tackle the (prisons) budget," said State Sen. Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Corrections.

The percentage of parole revocations has risen steadily in recent years and is now well over 60 percent per year, causing problems for California's overcrowded prisons. Each of the state's 33 prisons are above capacity, leading to hundreds of millions of dollars in unbudgeted overtime for prison guards.

Prison officials say revoking parole in administrative hearings often buys time for prosecutors to build stronger cases.

"It's a safety net," said Bill Sessa, a spokesman for the Board of Prison Terms, the agency responsible for parole revocation proceedings. The revocations avoid having to put criminals on trial for minor offenses, and when major crimes are involved, "we can keep a parolee behind bars until a case can be made."

Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown says his city suffers because of the parole system.

"The revolving door is failing. They aren't getting the marketable skills and literacy they need in prison. It's a big huge problem," Brown said.

Gay bishop takes over as head of diocese

CONCORD, N.H. (AP)—With three mighty thumps on the church door Sunday, V. Gene Robinson knocked and was welcomed into St. Paul's sanctuary, where he officially became the Episcopal Church's first openly gay bishop.

Sunday's investiture ceremony does not carry the same weight as Robinson's consecration, which rocked the Episcopal Church in November. But it gave a capacity crowd of more than 600 the chance to welcome the new leader of the Diocese of New Hampshire with whistles, shouts and a standing ovation.



Robinson

Bishop Douglas Theuner, who officially retired Sunday, handed Robinson the ceremonial staff that transferred the diocese into his hands. They had shared power since Robinson was made a bishop.

"May the Lord stir up in you the flame of holy charity and the power of faith that overcomes the world," the Rev. David Jones, rector of St. Paul's, said in the ceremony.

"It's a family time for the diocese. It's a time to give thanks and a time to welcome Gene to his new role," said the Rev. Hays Junkin, who opened the door when Robinson knocked.

Robinson is the first openly gay man to be elected as a bishop in the national Episcopal church, as well as the worldwide Anglican Communion of which it is a part. His consecration drew protesters and triggered angry responses from many corners of the world.

Several Anglican bishops abroad have said they will no longer

Seattle mayor to recognize gay marriages

SEATTLE (AP)—Seattle's mayor said Sunday the city will begin recognizing the marriages of gay employees who tie the knot elsewhere, although it will not conduct its own same-sex weddings.

Mayor Greg Nickels was to sign an executive order Monday giving same-sex spouses of city employees all the benefits of heterosexual spouses, including health insurance.

He also planned to send a proposal to the City Council that would extend that recognition to employees of city contractors and protect the rights of all same-sex married couples in Seattle.

"The basic message is one of fairness, and that is that people who are willing to make a commitment to one another, who love one another, and who are willing to take on the responsibilities of marriage ought to

be able to, regardless of their gender," Nickels told the Associated Press.

Seattle has offered domestic partnership benefits to its employees since 1989, but the process requires workers to fill out extensive paperwork. Under the new order, married same-sex couples will be able to skip that process, officials said.

Nickels said he cannot follow the lead of mayors in San Francisco and New Paltz, N.Y., by allowing same-sex weddings because counties, not cities, have the authority to issue marriage licenses in Washington.

More than 3,600 same-sex marriages were performed in San Francisco over the last three weeks, and hundreds of gay couples were granted wedding licenses last week in Portland, Ore. The marriages are being challenged in court.



Nickels

associate with the Episcopal Church USA because it approved Robinson's election.

In the United States, a dozen conservative bishops are organizing an alternative network of dioceses and parishes that object to Robinson's lifestyle. They argue that homosexuality violates biblical laws.

Robinson has lived with his partner, Mark Andrew, a state administrator, for 15 years and has two daughters from a previous marriage.

"Let's be clear," Robinson told CBS's "60 Minutes" in an interview scheduled to air Sunday night. "We've always had gay bishops. All I'm doing

is being honest about it."

Most of the state's Episcopalians support Robinson, but a conservative minority continues to oppose his consecration. Two churches, Church of the Redeemer in Rochester and St. Mark's in Ashland have voted to affiliate with the new network of conservative churches.

Robinson said he hopes to work with the two churches, even though their members have said they do want Robinson to serve as their bishop.

"Here in the diocese we are continuing to reach out in every way possible to individuals for whom this is still a troubling thing," Robinson said.

Boy Scouts rescued after Utah avalanche

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A huge wall of snow collapsed and buried the entrances to a series of manmade caves where more than three dozen Boy Scouts and their leaders were sleeping during a winter survival camping trip, but everyone was rescued unharmed.

The scouts had carved the caves deep into the snow on a ridge in northern Utah's Logan Canyon, at an elevation of 7,400 feet.

"You're pretty cozy inside of them," said Randy Maurer, the father of one of the scouts. "You're completely oblivious to what's going on outside."

After the 39 scouts and scout leaders went to sleep Friday night, wind gusting to 64 mph piled snow into a huge cornice hanging over the slope where the scouts dug their caves.

The 500-foot cornice collapsed just before 4 a.m. Saturday, burying the entrances to the caves under 6 to 8 feet of snow.

Nichols jury selection moving quickly

McALESTER, Okla. (AP)—A judge's methodical approach to jury selection is beating the estimates of how long it would take to pick a jury for the state murder trial of Oklahoma City bombing conspirator Terry Nichols.

Defense attorneys have said pretrial publicity about the bombing that killed 168 people and Nichols' 1997 conviction on federal charges made it nearly impossible to find jurors who could be fair and impartial anywhere in Oklahoma.

They predicted it could take weeks to seat a jury to hear the case.

However, Judge Steven Taylor predicted before the start of jury

selection that the process would take a mere five to seven days.

And by week's end, 42 prospective jurors had emerged who said they were impartial and also would be able to give Nichols the death penalty if he were convicted.

Prosecutors wrapped up their examination of the panel after just a few hours of questioning, and Nichols' lawyers will get to question the panel when jury selection resumes Monday.

At the current pace, a 12-member jury, with six alternates, could be chosen and seated by Wednesday, said Irven Box, an Oklahoma City attorney and legal analyst at Nichols' state and federal trials.

Williamson said the Scout leaders who called for help knew approximately where the caves were, and emergency crews used shovels and snow probes to locate the scouts.

Asia

'Pakistan knew of nuke black market'

By **GEORGE JAHN**
AP WRITER

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—U.N. investigators are increasingly certain Pakistan government leaders knew the country's top atomic scientist was supplying other nations with nuclear technology and designs, particularly North Korea, diplomats told The Associated Press.

While rogue nations were the main customers of the nuclear black market, sales of enriched uranium and warhead drawings have fed international fears that terrorists also could have bought

weapons technology or material, the diplomats said.

The investigation has widened beyond Iran, Libya and North Korea - the identified customers of the network headed by Abdul Qadeer Khan - they said, speaking on condition of anonymity in a series of interviews.

The diplomats' assessment comes about half way through the probe by the International Atomic Energy Agency and western intelligence services into the Khan network, whose tentacles extended from Pakistan to Dubai, Malaysia, South Korea, Switzerland, Germany,

Japan, Britain, the Netherlands and beyond with potential ties to Syria, Turkey and Spain.

Investigators told AP they expect to complete the probe by June, eight months after U.S. officials confronted the Pakistani government with suspicions about Khan, setting into motion events that led the father of Islamabad's nuclear program to confess last month.

Despite denials by the Pakistani government, investigators now are certain that

some, if not all, of the country's decision makers were aware of Khan's dealings, especially with North Korea, which apparently helped Islamabad build missiles in exchange for aid with its nuclear arms program, said one diplomat.

"In all cases except Pakistan, we are sure there was no government involvement," he said. "In Pakistan, it's hard to believe all this happened under their noses and nobody knew about it."



Khan

The diplomats didn't say which parts of the Pakistani government might have known of Khan's black market activity - military, political or both.

Andrew Koch, of Jane's Defense Weekly, said he ran into evidence that senior military officers knew of Khan's sideline four years ago when he attended a military technology exhibition in Karachi. There, the booth of A.Q. Khan's Research Laboratories, complete with pamphlets offering uranium enrichment equipment, shared space with displays of electronics, anti-tank missiles

and other items sold by the government defense industry, he said.

"I picked up the (Khan) brochures and I inquired whether everything inside was for sale and was told, 'yes, of course, it all had government approval and was available for sale and export,'" he said from Washington.

Pakistan's president, Pervez Musharraf, has insisted his government was not involved. But his pardon of Khan led to speculation the scientist agreed to keep silent on any government involvement in exchange for avoiding punishment.



Tamil Tigers march on the road to Thopigila Camp, the main military camp of the break away faction of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in Eastern Sri Lanka, Thursday, March 4, 2004.

Sri Lankan rebel claims attempt on life

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—A perilous rift in the Tamil Tiger rebel ranks overshadowed a top Norwegian mediator's visit Monday to Sri Lanka, where a renegade warlord has put his forces on alert and accused top guerrilla leaders of sending death squads to hunt him down.

Norwegian peace broker Erik Solheim was to arrive for meetings scheduled to coincide roughly with the two-year anniversary of Sri Lanka's landmark cease-fire signed between the Tigers and the

government in February 2002.

But the unprecedented rebel rift has dealt the biggest test to the cease-fire so far, and one of the biggest blows to the Tigers since they began their insurrection in 1983. The Tigers don't tolerate dissent and usually kill anyone who challenges top commander Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

Eastern rebel commander Vinayagamoorthis Muralitharan, also known as Karuna, withdrew his 6,000 fighters from the 15,000-strong guerrilla army last week in a dispute with northern-based Prabhakaran

over troop deployment.

Muralitharan said too many eastern-based rebels were being redeployed to the north, and that northern-based Tamils were favored in the Tiger administration.

The situation appeared to deteriorate rapidly.

Muralitharan sought Thursday to negotiate his own cease-fire accord, a notion rejected by the government on Friday. On Saturday, the Tigers' leadership announced that Muralitharan was expelled, and the renegade warlord said Sunday his forces were on alert for attacks.

"We have reliable information that killer squads sanctioned by the northern leadership have been sent with the intention of attacking me and my forces," Muralitharan told The Associated Press by telephone. "These moves can lead to internal killing" between breakaway forces and the main guerrilla army, he said.

The pro-Prabhakaran TamilNet Web site reported Sunday that Muralitharan's support appeared to be weakening and that key officers had defected to the north.

Foreign minister: China seeking friends

BEIJING (AP)—China's rising status shouldn't worry its neighbors, the foreign minister said Saturday, calling his country's growing prosperity its "biggest contribution to global peace."

Nonetheless, Li Zhaoxing insisted China won't allow "any outside force to interfere" in its effort to unite with rival Taiwan, and he rejected foreign criticism of China's human rights record.

Li gave a two-hour news conference on the second day of the annual session of China's parliament. Though he offered no new initiatives, the former ambassador to Washington used the nationally televised appearance to affirm Beijing's vision of itself as a benign international power and partner in anti-terrorism, trade and nuclear security.

Li said China supports efforts to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction—though he didn't answer a question on newly released U.S. documents that suggest

Beijing helped Pakistan build nuclear weapons.

Declassified papers reviewed by the National Security Archive, an institute at George Washington University, show U.S. unease over secret China-Pakistan security and military cooperation dating to the late 1960s, and examples of Chinese assistance to Pakistan's nuclear weapons-related projects in the late 1970s.

"China's peaceful development is not a threat or barrier to its neighbors or the whole world," Li said. "China's development itself is the biggest contribution to global peace and development."

Li stressed a key theme of Chinese diplomacy—a "multipolar world" where unity among nations counterbalances major powers such as the United States, which Beijing regards as both a major commercial and political partner and a potential enemy.

"We are trying to make as many friends as possible," Li said. "The more friends China has, the better."

Deaths of conjoined twins ruled accident

SINGAPORE (AP)—A Singapore court ruled Saturday that surgeons who tried to separate adult conjoined twins from Iran should not be held criminally liable for their deaths.

The ruling concludes an inquest into the deaths of Ladan and Laleh Bijani, 29, who died of blood loss during the 50-hour surgery in Singapore last July. Afterward, the doctors were criticized for undertaking an operation where the risks far outweighed the chances of success.

State coroner Malcolm Tan, who presided over the inquest, said he was satisfied from the evidence that criminal charges were unwarranted. He added that the surgeons did everything they

could to save the sisters.

During his testimony, lead surgeon Dr. Keith Goh said previously undetected blood vessels suddenly opened when the twins were 90 percent separated. "We felt we were at the point of no return," he told the court last month.

However one of his assistants, Dr. Ben Carson, director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, said the team could have stopped the surgery and possibly saved the twins.

On Saturday, Tan agreed with Goh's assessment, saying it would have been too risky to halt the operation. He added that Carson made his comments with the benefit of hindsight.

Japan farm owner commits suicide with wife

TOKYO (AP)—The head owner of a Japanese poultry business accused of covering up the spread of deadly bird flu among its chickens apparently hanged himself with his wife on one of their farms, police said Monday.

Hajimu Asada, 67, and his wife, Chisako, 64, were found early Monday morning outside a chicken pen in Himeji, about 480 kilometers (300 miles) west of Tokyo, a local police official

said on condition of anonymity.

Police found a suicide note saying: "We have caused so much trouble."

The Asada Nosan farm has come under fire for not telling authorities that its chickens were dying en masse in Tamba, Kyoto prefecture (state), preventing officials from containing the disease at an early stage.

Some 18,000 chickens had died of the flu on Asada's farm—and some of the meat and eggs

sold—before an anonymous phone call alerted authorities. Eventually, the disease killed 130,000 birds at the farm in Tamba, and the rest of the chickens there were culled.

Asada, also former deputy chairman of the Japan Poultry Association, had faced widespread criticism. He acknowledged that his farm had stepped up shipments of chicken meat after noticing the birds were dying, and Japanese

Agriculture Minister Yoshiyuki Kamei publicly admonished him for acting so late.

The government was considering criminal charges against Asada, and local media reports said authorities were preparing raids on his company's offices.

Agriculture ministry spokesman Takayuki Toriumi on Monday said the virus found from the second chicken farm in Kyoto was confirmed as H5N1, the type sweeping through much of Asia.

Group: US' Afghan record marred by civilian deaths, lawless arrests

By **STEPHEN GRAHAM**
AP WRITER

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—U.S. operations in Afghanistan are marred by needless civilian casualties, lawless arrests and the alleged torture of prisoners, Human Rights Watch said Monday.

The U.S. military rejected the group's findings, saying it "confused the situation" in strife-torn Afghanistan for one where peacetime methods could be used.

Still, the report raises uncomfortable questions for the United States as it embarks on new operations to crush elusive militants like al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

"The behavior of the United States sends the message that the U.S. operates on a set of double standards," the New York-based rights group said, referring to the Washington's criticism of other countries' human rights records.

The 50-page report said the military used excessive force to capture suspects in residential areas.

In one raid detailed in the report, a farmer died from gunfire during an arrest operation aimed at a different man and his two sons—all of whom were later released.

The report also slammed American forces for an assault on an arms-filled compound in southeastern Paktia province last December that triggered

explosions, toppled a wall and crushed six children to death. Another raid the following day killed nine more children, when a U.S. warplane strafed a mountain village in neighboring Ghazni province.

The military says it has modified its procedures after the deaths of the children, and insisted its record in avoiding civilian casualties was "outstanding."

"We're not perfect," U.S. military spokesman Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty said. "But we work hard to improve."

Human Rights Watch said the military's approach has helped alienate America's allies, angered many Afghans and "lessened their willingness to

cooperate with U.S. forces."

The report also criticized U.S. treatment of some of the estimated 1,000 Afghans and other nationals arrested in Afghanistan since 2002.

Suspects seized by American troops are often whisked to Bagram, the main U.S. base north of Kabul. The CIA also runs prisons in Afghanistan, Human Rights Watch said. Other suspects languish in prisons run by local Afghan warlords, many of them allies of the U.S.-backed government.

The study included what it said were "credible and consistent" allegations that prisoners were beaten, deprived of sleep and shackled for long periods.

China rescuers save 15 of 24 trapped miners

BEIJING (AP)—Fifteen coal miners have been rescued from a flooded shaft in northwest China and nine more remain missing, the government said Monday.

The miners hugged their families and cried when they emerged from the No. 2 Mine of the Hami Coal Co. in China's northwestern Muslim Xinjiang region, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

One had been carried up on a rescue worker's back while the rest managed to walk on their own, Xinhua said. All were rushed to the hospital in waiting ambulances, it said.

Forty-nine miners were underground when the mine shaft flooded Sunday morning. Twenty-five managed to escape while rescuers worked desperately to save survivors who contacted the surface by China's poorly regulated mines are the world's deadliest despite repeated government pledges to boost safety. Many accidents are blamed on a lack of required fire and ventilation equipment or a disregard for safety rules.

Last year, more than 6,700 deaths were reported in explosions, cave-ins and other disasters. In the past month alone, 67 Chinese coal miners have been reported killed in fires and cave-ins.

North Korea threatens new demands

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea threatened new counter-demands Monday in the standoff with the United States over Pyongyang's nuclear program, saying it may insist on the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea and a "verifiable and irreversible" security guarantee from Washington.

North Korea said it would forward the new demands if the United States failed to drop its own demand that Pyongyang "completely, verifiably and irreversibly" dismantle its nuclear weapons programs.

North Korea has said it is willing to give up its nuclear program in return for energy and economic aid, as well as a U.S. guarantee that it will not invade the communist country.

But six-nation talks aimed at brokering a deal ended last month without a major breakthrough. Sides differed over what programs and nuclear sites would be subject to dismantlement and inspection and over how any dismantlement would be verified, South Korean officials have said.

In a dispatch carried Monday by the country's official KCNA news agency, North Korea said if the United States continues to insist on complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement, it would offer its own counter demands.

"With the United States demanding (complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement), we too cannot but demand the complete withdrawal of U.S. military stationed in South Korea in a verifiable manner, and also a complete verifiable and irreversible security guarantee," the report said.

KCNA was monitored by South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

The new demands, if brought to the negotiating table, could complicate the next round of six-nation talks between the United States, the two Koreas, China, Russia and Japan.

Cambodian babies-for-sale trade persist despite ban

By **ROBIN McDOWELL**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LAING KOUT, Cambodia (AP)—The chief baby trader in this dirt-road village 140 kilometers from the capital waits at a pagoda to hear whether a neighbor will sell her 2-month-old twins to a family overseas.

"No?" Chea Kim says when told the desperate woman has changed her mind about giving up her children for as little as US\$20 each. "Why not?"

Although illegal baby sales may have slowed since the United States, France, the Netherlands and several other countries started suspending international adoptions from Cambodia two years ago, the practice persists in poverty-stricken villages like Laing Kout, according to an investigation by The Associated Press.

The director of one U.S. agency that appears to have benefited from Laing Kout's thriving baby trade is scheduled to be sentenced Friday, in a case that made international headlines because the agency also handled the adoption of actress Angelina Jolie's son, Maddox.

There is no evidence that the actress did anything wrong or that the boy was not an orphan—one of several hundred Cambodian children adopted by Americans each year until the ban, peaking at more than 400 in 2000.

In Chea Kim's case, an orphanage catering to international adoptions approached her five years ago and told her it was willing to pay up to US\$100 for newborns so she gave them her own 3-day-old daughter.

Later she regretted the decision, and when asked if she wanted to give another child said no. But that didn't stop her from persuading other mothers to sell their babies—18 in total—claiming they had been abandoned and the birth parents were unknown.

Others in this poor village, most of whom earn less than



Soum Savy, center, holds one of her two-month-old twins Feb. 1, 2004 in Laing Kout village, Kampong Cham province, Cambodia, 140 kilometers (90 miles) north of the capital Phnom Penh.

US\$1 a day as contract laborers in rice and bean fields, recognized a good business opportunity when they saw one and also started bringing babies to the WOVA Cham Chao orphanage just outside Phnom Penh, the capital.

It was one of several used by Seattle International Adoptions, which placed at least 700 children in American homes before the U.S. ban in December 2001.

Following a U.S. investigation, the agency's doors were shut last year and its director, Lynn Devin, 50, and her sister, Lauryn Galindo, 52, indicted on charges of conspiring to commit visa fraud.

Among the charges they faced were falsifying documents to make it look as if babies with parents were orphans, swapping at least one sick child with a healthy one in the middle of adoption procedures, and using the names of dead infants for the living.

Devin, who pleaded guilty to visa fraud and conspiracy to launder money, is to be sentenced Friday. Galindo, who pleaded innocent to the visa

fraud allegations, is scheduled to go to trial in June.

Many of the women who gave up their newborns in Laing Kout were too poor to raise them—receiving as little as US\$20 for each child from intermediaries like Chea Kim. Some did so after being left by their husbands, out of spite or desperation, or in hope that adoptive parents, or the children, would send back money in years to come.

Complaints about baby sales and thefts have come to a near standstill since the United States and France—the two largest markets for Cambodian children—put a hold on adoptions, said Women's Affairs Minister Mu Sochua.

But some villagers are still trying to cash in.

WOVA Cham Chao stopped accepting babies a few years ago, but another orphanage opened in nearby Kandal province's Kein Svay district, allegedly run by a former employee, villagers from Laing Kout said.

Nop Phat, a farmer, who has delivered five babies to the orphanage, rattles off the names of pregnant women in and around

fabric, said Dr. Sotheara Chhim, deputy director of Transcultural Psycho-social Organization.

Little has been done in the years that followed to rebuild institutions that traditionally foster a sense of community or build values and trust.

The most severe damage was done during the Khmer Rouge's bloody four-year reign, when Maoist-inspired revolutionaries purposely obliterated all aspects of traditional Cambodia, emptying the cities and herding people to the countryside to work as slaves in the rice fields.

As many as 2 million Cambodians, or one in five, died of starvation, overwork, execution or illness.

People were taught to think only of the revolution, with the result that they learned to think only of themselves in order to survive, said Sotheara Chhim.

"We were not even allowed to cry if someone in our family died," he said. "Without the tragedy all of us have experienced, people would have a broader way of thinking. They might still be poor, but I don't think mothers would resort so quickly to selling their children."

Though it is impossible to say how widespread the problem is, even Cambodia's king has expressed concern, describing the adoption issue as "a complex but very sad one for me."

"Extreme poverty among a large number of our people ... has pushed a non-negligible number of parents to sell their children to rich foreigners," King Norodom Sihanouk, 81, wrote on his Web site in February.

Though some go to loving homes in America and Europe, and are given education, he said, "we are losing our dignity if we sell children."

Cambodian law limits adoptions to abandonment or the death of a child's parents. To get around this, adoption agencies and facilitators have claimed children were abandoned with birth mothers unknown.

World

Haiti gunmen open fire on crowd, 5 dead

By IAN JAMES and PAISLEY
DODDS
AP WRITERS

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Gunmen opened fired Sunday on thousands of unarmed demonstrators calling for the prosecution of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, killing four protesters and a foreign journalist in the worst attack since the Haitian president's fall.

U.S. Marines returned fire—the first known armed action by U.S. forces sent to stabilize the country—but angry survivors accused the Marines and their French colleagues of not doing enough to prevent the attack.

Blood slicked the floors of a private hospital where victims were rushed. Women screamed and men cried as the few doctors tried to treat the injured with little medication.

A French Air Force helicopter made a dramatic landing on the road in front of the private Canape Vert Hospital, and two men descended to wheel a gurney of emergency medical supplies to the gate. Most of the victims were in serious condition with wounds from assault rifles, said surgeon Ronald Georges.

Several witnesses said they saw Aristide militants open fire from across the vast Champs de Mars plaza as thousands gathered in front of the presidential National Palace. U.S. Marine Maj. Richard



Opponents of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide run away from shooting in Port-au-Prince, Haiti Sunday, March 7, 2004. AP

Crusan said it was unclear who the gunmen were.

He told The Associated Press that three Marines returned fire from the palace in the direction of the gunshots.

Ricardo Ortega, a New York correspondent for the Spanish television station Antena 3, was shot in the stomach and died at the hospital. He had taken a leave of absence but volunteered to cover Haiti, the

network said from Madrid.

Also killed was Haitian Cesar Milfort, whom relatives described as an unemployed former university student.

Among more than 30 injured people was South Florida Sun-Sentinel photographer Michael Laughlin, 37, who was shot in the shoulder and face but was in stable condition at the hospital.

Some witnesses said gunmen first appeared outside the old

Defense Ministry building on the plaza, then kneeled on the sidewalk and opened fire.

Others said gunmen in two all-terrain vehicles started the shooting, while others said they saw gunmen shooting down from the roof of a movie theater.

"The peacekeepers were nowhere near where the shooting was," said Almil Costel, 31, who was shot twice in the left shoulder.

Aristide statement delivered in Africa

BANGUL, Central African Republic (AP)—Authorities in the Central African Republic on Sunday read a statement from exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide saying he's being "well-looked after" and will personally address reporters at an unspecified and "opportune time."

Central African Republic Foreign Minister Charles Wenezouli read the statement he attributed to Aristide from a small card handed to him by Aristide's wife, Mildred, in front of the press.

Aristide's wife looked on tight-lipped as the short statement was read, but did not speak to reporters. Aristide was not present.

"Dear journalists, at the opportune time, I will have the possibility ... to reply to your questions," Wenezouli said, reading the two-line statement from the card. "We are very well looked after," the statement said.

Aristide took up asylum in this impoverished African capital on March 1 after resigning his post in Haiti amid a two-week insurgency. Aristide has said the United States forced him from power.

When reporters asked Mildred Aristide if her husband was healthy, she nodded. Asked if the couple were prisoners, she sighed.

Crusan said the Marines moved vehicles in front of the National Palace when the shooting started. He said no Marines were wounded.

French commander Col. Daniel Leplatou defended the peacekeepers: "We're not able to secure the lives of all of the demonstrators."

After the shooting, a truck with loudspeakers drove around the palace, blaring music. One man speaking over its loudspeaker shouted at the U.S. Marines: "People are dying every day in this country. You

have to do something about it."

Aristide supporters had planned a joint demonstration Sunday but said they were offered no protection by the peacekeepers and were afraid of reprisal attacks from anti-Aristide activists. Their protest was rescheduled for Monday, although leaders said they were still worried about security.

"The Americans are only here to protect those who helped oust Aristide," said Ednar Ducoste, 23, an Aristide supporter. "If we had guns, we would be fighting against them right now."

Iraq cleric drops opposition to charter

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Iraq's most powerful cleric signaled to Shiite leaders that he won't object to an interim constitution, clearing the way for the charter to be signed Monday without changes.

The agreement, key to U.S. plans to hand power to Iraqis, comes after talks between Iraqi Governing Council members and Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Hussein al-Sistani, who had



al-Ulloum

reservations about giving Iraq's Kurdish minority too much power. Shiite politicians, who days earlier had refused to sign the constitution because of al-Sistani's opposition to certain clauses, said after talks with the cleric Sunday that they would sign the document unchanged.

Even if the charter is signed, the fallout from the political crisis remains. The squabble exacerbated sectarian tensions and reinforced fears of Shiite

One hurt in attack on US headquarters

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Insurgents fired at least seven rockets on the U.S. coalition headquarters in Baghdad Sunday night, hitting a hotel used by U.S. occupation officials and wounding one American, the military said. It was the biggest attack on the Green Zone in weeks.

The Al-Rasheed hotel is located across the street from the Baghdad Convention Center, where many coalition offices are located. The center

domination by the Sunni Arab and Kurdish minorities, politicians and observers said. Shiite politicians say they are motivated by a genuine concern to build Iraq's democracy on a sound basis.

"To say that the Shiite religious leadership is now meddling in politics is to understate the case," said senior politician Naseer Kamel al-Chaderchi, a Sunni Arab on Iraq's Governing Council. "The majority must not be allowed to usurp the rights of others."

was where Iraq's Governing Council intended to sign an interim constitution on Friday, but a last-minute political dispute delayed the ceremony. Council members said they hoped to sign the document Monday.

A series of explosions echoed across central Baghdad from the strike, sirens blared, and smoke and flames were briefly visible in the Green Zone, the heavily guarded area where the U.S.-led coalition is based.

Five rockets hit the hotel,

The crisis over the constitution started when five of the council's 13 Shiite members balked at signing the draft they and the rest of the council had agreed to days earlier—scuttling an elaborate ceremony laid out Friday by the U.S.-led coalition and handing Washington an acute embarrassment.

Two days of intensive talks between the five and al-Sistani in the holy city of Najaf resolved the impasse.

"Sistani has reservations, but

where some civilian contractors are living and a coalition dining hall is located. A U.S. civilian contractor was wounded, the military said.

The rockets were fired around 7:30 p.m. from a white SUV parked outside the Green Zone near the former Foreign Ministry building. The SUV burst into flames during the barrage, and U.S. troops found two rockets in a rack on the vehicle. The troops then blew up the vehicle, a military spokesman said.

it will not constitute an obstacle," said Mohammed Hussein Bahr al-Ulloum, who helped coordinate the talks on behalf of his father, council president Mohammed Bahr al-Ulloum. "It will be signed as it was agreed upon before by the Governing Council members."

Top U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer was more guarded.

"We're certainly hopeful that, as the president of the council said, we're going to sign it tomorrow," he told "Fox News Sunday" in an interview.

Venezuela leader vows war if the US invades

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez on Sunday vowed to freeze oil exports to the United States and wage a "100-year war" if Washington ever tried to invade Venezuela.

The United States has repeatedly denied ever trying to overthrow Chavez, but the leftist leader accuses Washington of being behind a failed 2002 coup and of funding opposition groups seeking a recall referendum on his presidency.

Chavez accused the United States of ousting former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and warned Washington not to "even think about trying something similar in Venezuela."

Venezuela "has enough allies on this continent to start a 100-year war," Chavez said during his weekly television show.

He added that "U.S. citizens could forget about ever getting Venezuelan oil" if the United States ever tried to invade.

Venezuela provides about 15 percent of U.S. oil imports, but relations between the two countries are rocky over Chavez's friendship with Cuban President Fidel Castro, his criticism of U.S.-led negotiations for a free trade zone in the Americas and his opposition to the war in Iraq.

The United States was slow to condemn the 2002 coup, initially accusing Chavez of provoking his own downfall.

Chavez has increasingly railed against U.S. meddling in Venezuelan affairs as his opponents step up protests to demand the recall vote.



Chavez

Gaza raid kills 14, revenge vowed

By IBRAHIM BARZAK
AP WRITER

BUREIJ REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli troops carried out their deadliest raid in Gaza in 17 months on Sunday, part of a surge of bloodshed ahead of a possible Israeli withdrawal from the coastal strip.

Fourteen Palestinians were killed and 81 wounded in more than six hours of fighting on the edge of the Bureij refugee camp.

The battle pitted Palestinians armed with assault rifles, anti-tank missiles and grenade launchers against Israeli troops firing from helicopters, tanks and rooftop sniper positions. Children chased tanks, throwing stones.

Among the dead were three boys, ages 8, 12 and 15.

The Israeli military said the purpose of the raid was to put Palestinian militants on the defensive and prevent them from carrying out attacks on Israelis. However, residents of Bureij said soldiers did not try to make arrests or search for arms caches.

The Palestinian Authority denounced the raid as "state terrorism," and urged the international community to intervene.

Palestinians said Israeli soldiers were trying to draw out militants in what appeared to be a new tactic.

Armed groups routinely exhort their members over mosque loudspeakers to confront approaching Israeli troops, despite vastly inferior weapons and considerable risk. Sunday was no exception.

After the battle, a militant leader took the highly unusual step of appealing to his forces not to fall into the trap again.

"The Palestinian people are now uniting in the trenches of resistance,"



Mourners carry the body of Omer el Gamal, draped in a Hamas flag, during a funeral for nine in Nusseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, Sunday March 7, 2004.

said Islamic Jihad leader Mohammed al-Hindi, "but we also call on the sons of the resistance not to be dragged into battles forced upon us by the (Israeli) occupation."

Sunday's fighting was part of a

recent rise in violence that has been attributed to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's proposal to withdraw from most, if not all, of Gaza and parts of the West Bank if there is no progress toward peace in coming months.

Each side seems to be positioning itself to claim a withdrawal as a victory - Israel by pounding the militants hard before a pullout, and the armed groups by stepping up attacks to create the impression they

are chasing the Israelis out.

In the past week, Israeli helicopter gunships have struck twice, killing six militants and a boy in missile attacks in Gaza City. On Saturday, three militant Palestinian groups sent bomb-laden jeeps in a suicide mission aimed at blowing up an Israeli checkpoint on the edge of Gaza. Six Palestinians were killed in the blasts and exchanges of fire.

The raid was the deadliest in Gaza since October 2002, when 19 Palestinians were killed in an Israeli operation in the Khan Younis refugee camp.

The dead - 10 militants and four civilians - were given a joint funeral. Tens of thousands of Palestians marched in the streets, and masked Hamas militants pledged revenge. Hamas has carried out dozens of suicide bombings against Israelis during 41 months of conflict.

One Hamas gunman told mourners the militants are sending a message to Sharon that "we are ready for confrontation."

Avi Pazner, an Israeli government spokesman, said such raids help save Israeli lives. "Terrorism is pouring out of this refugee camp, and we have to stop it," Pazner said of Bureij.

There are concerns that an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza could push the crowded, impoverished territory into chaos. Already, rival groups are vying for power, as the Palestinian Authority has lost much of its influence, and attacks on Palestinian officials are on the increase.

Israel's proposed unilateral action has drawn fire from the Palestinians and muted criticism from the United States. Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, who is to meet with U.S. officials in Washington this week, is to assure them that Israel would not withdraw from Gaza until after the U.S. presidential election in November, security officials have said.

Greek conservatives win landslide win...

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greek conservatives swept to a landslide victory Sunday in parliamentary elections that ended 10 years of Socialist government and assigned a new caretaker to the troubled preparations for this summer's Olympics.

With 56 percent of votes counted, the New Democracy party was beating the Socialists 47 percent to 41 percent as part of a deep reshuffling of Greece's political order.

Socialist leader George Papandreou conceded defeat after various exit polls showed New Democracy with a strong lead.

The conservatives, led by 47-year-old Costas Caramanlis, broke into celebration. Car horns blared and champagne corks popped during street parties joined by thousands of people under a full moon. Fireworks exploded overhead. A blitz of cell phone text messages featured the New Democracy emblem and proclaimed: "We're coming!"

Caramanlis waved to supporters amid a sea of flares and blue party banners. Some also unfurled the five-ring Olympic flag in recognition of the new government's main task.

"The job will be difficult and the work ahead of us is hard," said Athens Mayor Dora Bakoyianni, whose father, former Premier Constantine Mitsotakis,

...as Haider's Freedom Party wins poll

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—Joerg Haider brought his party a stunning victory in his home province Sunday, confounding pundits and increasing the odds for a national comeback for the rightist known for anti-Jewish slurs and friendship with Saddam Hussein.

With Haider's Freedom Party polling more than 10 percentage points behind the Socialists just weeks before legislative elections in Carinthia province. Most predicted a Freedom Party loss after a string of defeats elsewhere over the past two years.

While the voting was restricted to Carinthia, its significance extended beyond Austria's southernmost province. Beyond assuring his reappointment as governor, the win

is the party's honorary president.

New Democracy was poised to take an overwhelming majority in the 300-seat parliament. Under the Greek system, the winning party takes the lion's share of seats for a four-year term.

The election put voters at a clear crossroads: Stick with the Socialist establishment or turn to the conservatives, whose leader has never served in a Cabinet post.

increased chances that Haider would be able to revitalize his party, which has less than 10 percent support nationally compared to close to 30 percent just four years ago.

"Haider's back," declared Werner Beutelmeyer of the Market Institute polling organization, predicting that with his win, he would become "stronger than ever" on the national political scene.

Final results showed the Freedom Party with 42.4 percent of the vote, compared to just over 38 percent for the rival Socialists.

In postelection interviews, Haider ruled out a quick return to national politics, declaring: "Of course I'm staying in Carinthia, and will keep my word to my supporters."

Caramanlis has promised smaller government, less bureaucracy and tax cuts to fuel growth and cut an unemployment rate of about 9 percent. Caramanlis has also pledged more funds for social welfare, education and health.

Although Greece has one of the highest growth rates in the European Union at 4.7 percent, it is fueled greatly by Olympic projects. Inflation was just under 3 percent.

Russian charged with e-mail threat to CIA

MOSCOW (AP)—Authorities in Siberia arrested an 18-year-old student on charges of sending an e-mail message threatening to blow up a subway system in the United States, police said Sunday.

The teenager allegedly sent the message to the CIA during a computer class at Altai Technical University in Barnaul, where he is a first-year student, state-run Rossiya television reported.

It said the brief message contained a threat of a bomb attack on a U.S. subway system and ended with the words, "You will all die, Allah is great."

The message was sent three weeks after a bomb killed 41 people on a Moscow subway car. Authorities said

a suicide bomber carried out the attack.

The student, who is now free but is forbidden to leave Barnaul during the investigation, was not named, but the network showed what it called footage of him being questioned. He said he had been surfing the Internet and "decided to go to the CIA site, just to take a look" and then sent the message, the network said.

A spokesman for the Interior Ministry's computer crime department, Anatoly Platonov, told The Associated Press the suspect was detained Feb. 29, two days after the message was detected by U.S. law enforcement officials. He would not confirm the message was sent to the CIA.

Explosion at game in El Salvador kills 1

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—An explosion at a soccer stadium in El Salvador killed one man and injured 27 others on Sunday, and police believed it was caused by pyrotechnics used to produce smoke.

The blast went off in the stands of the Jorge Gonzalez stadium, killing a Salvadoran man in his 20s, as the Alianza and San Salvador soccer teams prepared to take the field in San Salvador.

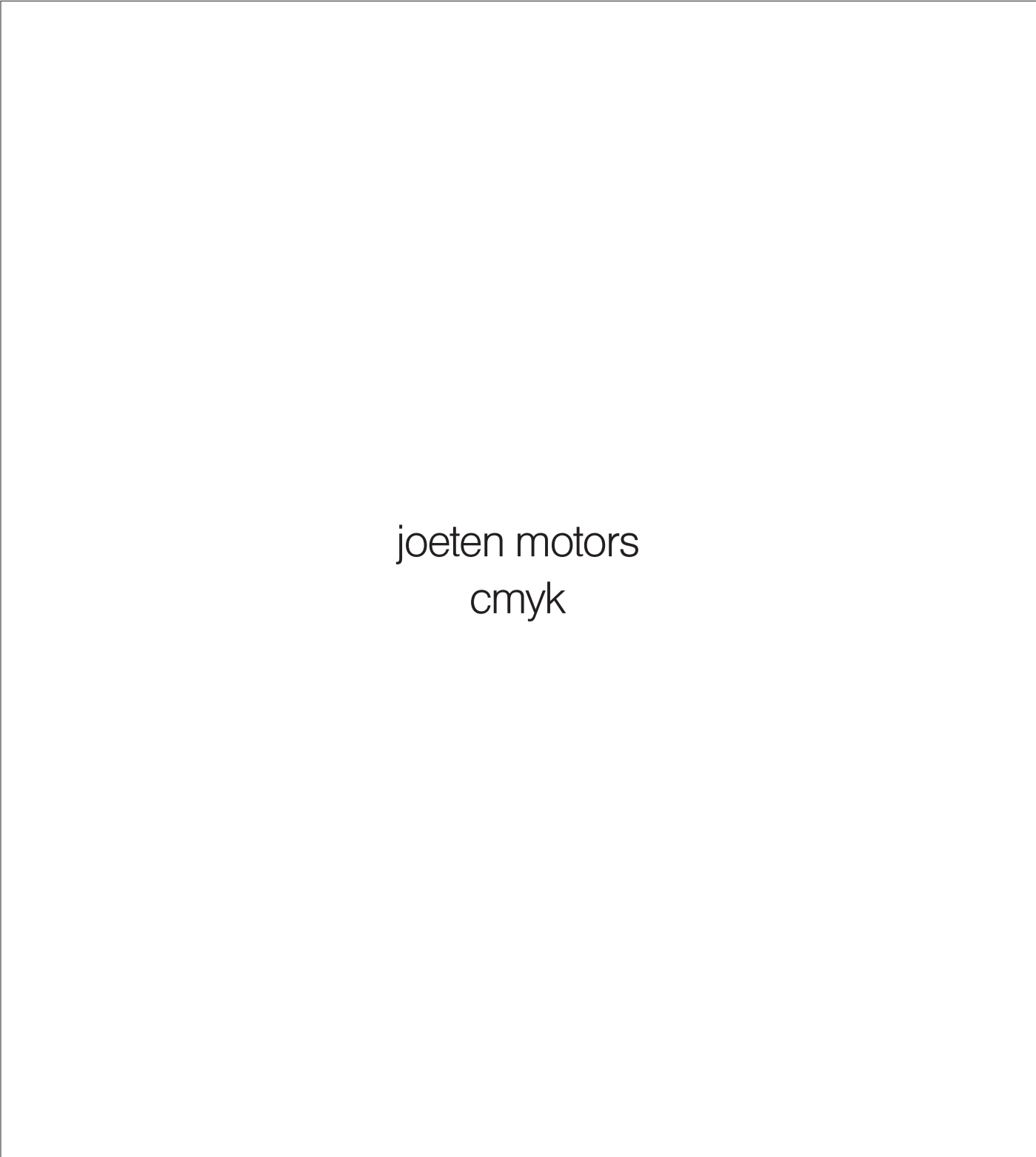
The victim apparently died after

mishandling chemicals designed to create the smoke often used during soccer games, said police spokesman Roberto Villalobos.

"We're discarding totally that it could have been a device that was launched," Villalobos said. "There were leftover chemicals that when combined usually ... only make a white smoke."

At least 27 others were burned or otherwise injured, including a 5-year-old girl, the Red Cross reported.

Overdrive



Life & Style

American designer Tom Ford bowing out

By SUZY PATTERSON
AP FASHION WRITER

American designer Tom Ford presents his final collection for Yves Saint Laurent on Sunday night and, perhaps, takes his final fashion bow after rising to cult figure status with his revival of the Gucci label.

The 42-year-old's farewell collection at YSL is the high point of the week of winter ready-to-wear shows in Paris, which ends Tuesday.

Ford gave his final show for Gucci on Feb. 25 in Milan to thundering applause, saying goodbye under a shower of rose petals. Another of his most recent high-profile creations was seen a week ago on Oscar night—the nude, beaded dress worn by South African star Charlize Theron, honored as best actress.

However, Ford lost out in contract talks with the two houses' parent company Pinault-Printemps-Redoute. He now dreams of directing movies.

Still, the show must go on, and Valentino's collection Sunday was superb. It featured elaborate, beautifully tailored clothes and a touch of the naughty for evening wear.

The collection recalled the decadent Berlin of the 1930s—a la Marlene Dietrich—starting with a lovely black tuxedo coat cut close to the body, paired with a white oxford cotton shirt and white cashmere tie.

White and black appeared in dressy, sometimes sexy outfits, like tight black cocktail numbers open at the chest or an evening sheath with lace insets at the hip and a deeply dipped back decollete.

It was not clear who would take over as designers for YSL and Gucci. Ford is to stay on until the end of April, when PPR buys the outstanding 30 percent of Gucci, but his final public bow is Sunday night.

Serge Weinberg, who heads parent company Pinault-Printemps-Redoute, said last week that the new chief executive and design team is to be named this week. They will replace Domenico De Sole and Ford.

Questions about the new Gucci team have hovered above PPR since November when the group announced that Ford and De Sole's contracts would not be renewed.

In an unconfirmed report, Women's

Wear Daily wrote last week that a threesome would handle Gucci creative design: Alessandra Fachinetti, top women's wear designer under Ford; Alfreda Giannini, who had worked at Fendi; and John Ray, Ford's menswear assistant. In-house designer Stefano Pilati would take over at YSL, the report said.

Ford told Women's Wear Daily in an interview published Friday that money was not the source of the breakup.

"Money had absolutely nothing to do with it. It was about control," he was quoted as saying.

After 10 years in fashion, Ford says he is looking for a change. He told WWD that he thinks of directing movies and has signed with Creative Artists Agency.

"I am very serious about wanting to make a movie I am actively looking for a project."

However, he added that he first needs to think.

"All I know is that I need to get to my ranch in New Mexico and spend three or four months riding my horses and just being alone."



Ford

Royal Opera boots singer Voigt for weight

By LINDSAY HOLMWOOD
AP WRITER

LONDON (AP)—The Royal Opera House in London canceled a performance by American star soprano Deborah Voigt because of her weight, a spokesman for the prestigious theater said Sunday.

Voigt had been scheduled to play the lead in a summer production of Richard Strauss' "Ariadne on Naxos," but casting director Peter Katona decided that a slimmer singer would be better for the part, spokesman Christopher Millard told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Katona had selected a black evening dress for the part and believed Voigt would not look right in it, Millard said.

"Normally Ariadne is presented on a stylized Greek island with the singers wearing toga-type clothes, but we wanted to present it in an elegant, modern evening dress," Katona was quoted as telling The Sunday Telegraph newspaper.

Anne Schwanewilms, a more slender but lesser-known soprano, is now to sing the part of Ariadne.

Voigt's weight remains a closely guarded secret, the newspaper said, but observers estimate it to be more than 200 pounds.

"I have big hips, and Covent Garden has a problem with them," she was



American opera singer Deborah Voigt sings the role of Isolde in Richard Wagner's opera "Tristan and Isolde" during a dress rehearsal at the State Opera in Vienna, in this May 19, 2003 file photo.

AP

quoted as saying. "Or at least their casting director, Peter Katona, has the problem, and he's made it clear that I won't be singing in his house as long as he's around. Which is sad."

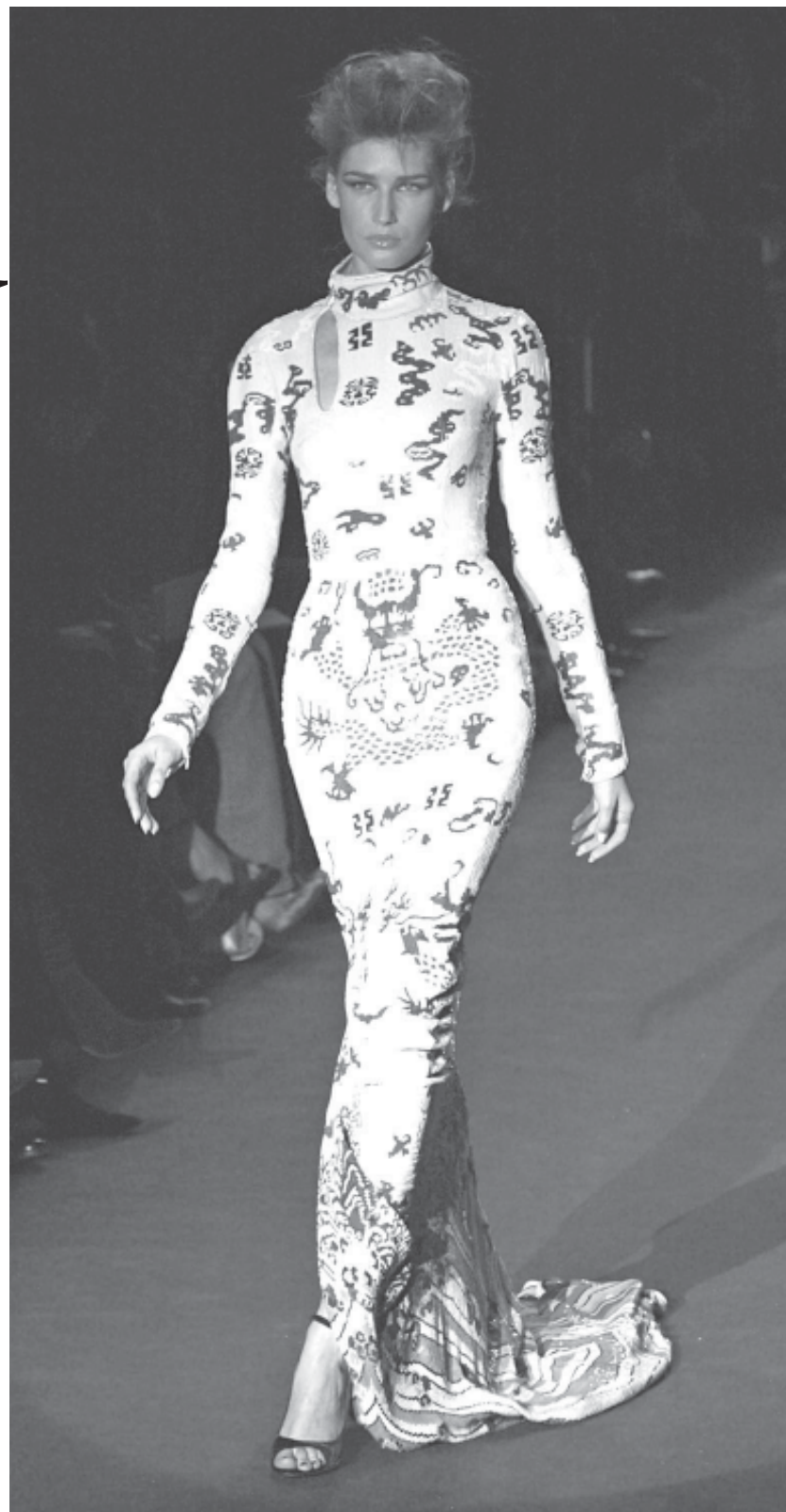
Katona said: "In making these kinds of decision, it is not just a question of how someone looks; it is also how they move on stage," the newspaper reported.

Millard confirmed by telephone that size was the reason that the 43-year-old Voigt, one of the world's most sought-after sopranos, was no longer scheduled to sing in the Royal Opera House production.

He said no contract was canceled in the decision to drop Voigt from the theater's schedule, but would not provide details of any arrangement.

But Voigt, who could not immediately be reached for comment, was quoted as telling The Sunday Telegraph she did have a contract with the theater.

"It's been a legal issue between us, because I was booked for Ariadne, but then he canceled my contract on the grounds that I wouldn't fit the context of the production," Voigt was quoted as saying.



AP

A model wears a printed Chinese-style yellow long dress designed by American fashion designer Tom Ford for Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche's fall-winter 2004-2005 ready-to-wear collection presented in Paris Sunday, March 7, 2004.

Political humorists needle candidates

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—Some left-leaning political humorists may be secretly hoping President Bush—whom they love to make fun of—is re-elected in December, but they say plenty of Democrats are good for a laugh, too.

Bush, whose tough-guy swagger and linguistic miscues have provided plenty of fodder for comedians, columnists and cartoonists, is the "gold standard" for the business, "Doonesbury" cartoonist Garry Trudeau said.

"I'd be crushed if he lost," he said Saturday during a panel discussion at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival.

But it's not just Bush who provides good material, panelists said. "John Kerry is so stiff," Time magazine's White House correspondent Matthew Cooper said during a seminar called "Who's Funnier—the Left or the Right?"

"You sort of see him sitting at home with a powdered wig watching

C-SPAN," Cooper said. "For John Kerry, being rebellious is having red wine with fish."

A survey by the Pew Research Center in January found that 21 percent of Americans age 18 to 29 regularly learn something about the presidential campaign or the candidates from television comedy shows.

That fact apparently has not been lost on politicians such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, who announced his candidacy for governor on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

John Edwards announced his presidential bid on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and, most recently, the Rev. Al Sharpton, a presidential hopeful, hosted "Saturday Night Live."

It's not surprising that politicians are reaching out more and more to humorists, said GOP consultant Mike Murphy, because it's easier to face a comedian than to "sit in the hot seat with Tim Russert."

‘The Passion’ soars beyond \$200M



By **DAVID GERMAIN**
AP MOVIE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” took in \$51.4 million in its second weekend to remain the top movie, racing past the \$200 million mark in just 12 days.

Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson’s action comedy “Starsky & Hutch” debuted in second place with \$29.05 million, while Viggo Mortensen’s horse-racing adventure “Hidalgo” opened at No. 3 with \$19.6 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

“The Passion,” Gibson’s bloody re-enactment of Christ’s crucifixion, has grossed \$212 million so far in the United States and Canada. The movie is expected to top \$300 million, said Bob Berney, president of Newmarket Films. The independent distributor was hired by Gibson to release “The Passion” after Hollywood studios passed on it.

The film, which stars Jim Caviezel as Christ, held up strongly, with receipts down just

James Caviezel in Newmarket’s “The Passion of the Christ.”

39 percent from its huge opening weekend of \$83.8 million. Movies debuting to such high numbers often drop 50 percent or more in their second weekends.

“The Passion” propelled Hollywood to a second straight weekend of rising revenues after a prolonged slump. The top 12 movies grossed \$131.5 million, up 39 percent from the same weekend last year.

Before “The Passion” opened, box-office revenues had been running 7 percent behind last year’s. Two big weekends for “The Passion” have pulled the industry virtually even with last year’s receipts, according to box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

The Academy Awards gave a solid bounce to best-picture winner “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King,” which climbed back into the top 10 with \$3.2 million, raising its total to \$368.3 million.

“The Passion” rode a storm of debate over its grisly violence and accusations of anti-Semitism to become the first religious blockbuster since the 1950s epics “The Ten Commandments” and “Ben-Hur.”

Its success indicates Christian

crowds rarely targeted by filmmakers will flock to theaters when a movie suits them.

“I think it does show there’s an ignored market, but the way I look at it, it’s film by film. To make this work, you have to have a brilliant film. The audience is very discerning,” Berney said.

In the next week, “The Passion” will climb past the \$228 million total take for “Signs,” the top-grossing movie Gibson has been connected with. Even adjusting Gibson’s “Lethal Weapon” grosses for inflation, “The Passion” will be his biggest hit.

“Here’s one of the most popular movie stars in the

world. Who would have thought he would out-gross all his big summer blockbusters with a movie about the crucifixion?” said Paul Dergarabedian, president of Exhibitor Relations.

After studios declined to handle “The Passion,” Gibson orchestrated a marketing scheme that rallied Christian leaders and church groups, which spread the word and snapped up blocks of tickets.

Fueling the frenzy was criticism from some Jewish and Christian leaders, who said “The Passion” could revive the notion that Jews collectively were responsible for Christ’s death.

Will Couric pick up prime-time slack?

By **DAVID BAUDER**
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—As if three hours of top-rated morning television wasn’t enough, Katie Couric is turning up on NBC in prime time this month to interview celebrities like Ben Affleck and disgraced journalist Jayson Blair.

This is the latest sign that Couric is competing harder for celebrity “gets,” which are more in play as ABC’s Barbara Walters—who long dominated this cutthroat arena along with Diane Sawyer—prepares to give up her weekly “20/20” perch this fall.

“I would be delighted if every interview that Barbara (once) got went to NBC,” said NBC News President Neal Shapiro.

He’ll believe Walters is slowing down when he actually sees it. Clearly, though, the networks aren’t passively

waiting to see how the dynamics will shift.

Late last year, Couric also scored interviews with Elizabeth Smart and Tom Cruise.

“I don’t think NBC puts a lot of pressure on me to do more,” Couric said, “but if there’s something very interesting and I want a crack at it and want to do a longer piece, I’m excited about it, too.”

A particularly potent prime-time interview, like Sawyer’s talk with Mel Gibson last month about “The Passion of the Christ,” sends ratings soaring far beyond typical newsmagazine fare.

They also appeal to television executives as inexpensive programming, certainly cheaper than a comedy, drama or investigative news story.

Walters, who has spoken to Martha Stewart and Sen. Hillary

Clinton in the past year, has complained that because of ratings pressure, news figures are increasingly taking a back seat to entertainers as interview subjects.

“The whole climate of our news industry now is pop culture,” said former network newswoman Connie Chung. “The Michael Jackson interview, Charlize Theron, Jennifer Aniston and Ben and J.Lo—all of these have taken on a heightened interest.”

When Chung worked at ABC News, she formed a murderer’s row of interview seekers with Walters and Sawyer.

CBS is less of a player in this field, primarily because dominant newsmagazines “60 Minutes” and “60 Minutes II” rarely run straight interview pieces—with the major exception of Jackson in December.



Couric

Sawyer, who’s had a strong run over the past year, is arguably at the top of the heap now. Besides Gibson, she’s recently interviewed President Bush, Howard Dean and wife Judith Steinberg, Aniston and the Dixie Chicks.

It’s one of the few areas where NBC News, leader in morning, evening news and Sunday talk ratings, is not dominant.

“NBC is saying, ‘Wait a minute, the game of big interviews has gotten so lopsided in favor of Diane and Barbara that we just can’t permit this to continue,’” said David Doss, Sawyer’s executive producer at ABC. “I think it makes perfect sense that they’re putting (Katie) out there more.”

ABC is ready for her. Plotting to keep its advantage, ABC is reportedly negotiating to hire British interviewer Martin Bashir, known for his top-rated chat with Jackson a year ago.

wallace

‘The Return of the King’ comes to video in May

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The march to Middle-earth will be shorter this time for the home-video release of the final chapter in “The Lord of the Rings.”

“The Return of the King” comes to DVD and VHS May 25, New Line Cinema announced Monday. That’s about three months quicker than parts one and two of the fantasy trilogy, both of which hit video in late summer.

The announcement comes a week after “The Return of the King” bulldozed its way through the Academy Awards, earning a record-tying 11 Oscars, including best picture and director for Peter Jackson, and sweeping every category in which it was nominated.

The awards bring added prestige, but for a franchise whose theatrical receipts are pushing \$3

billion, the Oscar attention was scarcely needed to boost sales.

“That is significant and valuable and adds to the imprimatur and pedigree of the trilogy, but the films have already achieved such high levels of acknowledgment and acceptance,” said Stephen Einhorn, president of New Line Home Entertainment. “I do not think it materially affects the

demand for the films.”

New Line had held off until August for home-video releases of “The Fellowship of the Ring” and “The Two Towers” the last two years to feed into anticipation for the theatrical release of the next film in J.R.R. Tolkien’s epic.

With the trilogy concluded, New Line decided to roll the conclusion out earlier on home video.

Sexy gift from in-laws has multiple meanings

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: This letter is in response to "Shocked," who was surprised when her husband's parents sent her lingerie for her birthday. Many men feel that lingerie is the ultimate turn-on. Her in-laws may have intended to add a little extra romance and provide a pleasant surprise for their son—a wish he himself may have conveyed.



Dear Abby

I speak from experience. My mother-in-law gave me some lingerie for my bridal shower, saying, "I was married once, too, and trust me—this will make him happy." And it has, three years later.

SARA IN TEXAS

DEAR SARA: That letter certainly struck a familiar chord with a lot of wives. Let me share some of the comments I received:

DEAR ABBY: For the shocked daughter-in-law who wasn't happy about the peek-a-boo nightie—that's nothing! I received the same kind of outfit from my mother-in-law at a couples' shower that was held at our Baptist Sunday school teacher's house, in front of a group of young Navy pilots.

And the family wonders why the relationship has always been tense.

BEEN THERE AND WORSE

DEAR BEEN THERE: Why not make it "past tense" and forgive her the lapse in judgment? The gift may have been well-intended, but her timing was off. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I can do her one better. When my mother died years ago, her prayer circle presented me with a gift of underpants. I've never been able to figure that one out.

MARY IN ASHEVILLE, N.C.

DEAR MARY: It makes one wonder what they were praying for.

DEAR ABBY: You missed a glaring point in the letter from "Shocked," the woman who wasn't sure how to react when her in-laws sent her a sexy negligee and a thong for her birthday (she was embarrassed): They had never sent her a birthday gift before!

Maybe the nightie wasn't a gift but a message. Perhaps the in-laws had heard something that caused them concern, and their gift was an attempt to inject some excitement into a flat relationship. "Shocked" should pause and consider the state of her marriage. After several years of marriage—especially with children—it's easy for a husband and wife to take each other for granted and grow apart.

If "Shocked" thinks her love life with her husband is lackluster, she might consider putting that gift to good use.

KAREN IN FORT WALTON BEACH, FLA.

DEAR KAREN: It's worth considering. However, it did not occur to me that instead of a birthday gift, her in-laws had given her a veiled warning.

DEAR ABBY: That letter brought back such memories for me. When my husband and I were married 40 years ago, my mother-in-law would buy me sexy nighties every year for Christmas and birthdays.

When our first son was born four years later, I began receiving flannel nightgowns from her. Maybe "Shocked's" in-laws are trying to tell her they're ready for grandchildren.

RITA IN SPRINGFIELD, MO.

DEAR RITA: If they are, they're making a mistake. Besides being inappropriate, that kind of meddling often puts daughters-in-law on the defensive.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Gooding takes NAACP Award for 'Radio'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Receiving the NAACP's Image award for his portrayal of James Robert "Radio" Kennedy was particularly sweet for Cuba Gooding Jr., who was stung by criticism that his portrayal of the mentally disabled man was too negative.

"I'm proud of the performance because the man's mannerisms were very indicative of the character that I portrayed," Gooding said after receiving the best actor in a motion picture award Saturday night.

"A lot of the situations in the movie came from actual events," he said. "Sometimes the truth is hard to watch but it's my job to bring the truth to the screen."

Kennedy became an inspiration first for the football team at T.L. Hanna High School and then the entire community.

Actor Cuba Gooding Jr. accepts the award for Actor in a Motion Picture at the NAACP Image Awards, Saturday night, March 6, 2004, in Universal City, Calif.

AP



NBC cuts scene in 'Charlie's Angels' pic

LOS ANGELES (AP)—NBC cut the final scene in its upcoming movie about the making of the popular television series "Charlie's Angels" after Farrah Fawcett's former manager complained.

Jay Bernstein threatened legal action if the scene was not removed, claiming it impugned his character and harmed his ability to make deals.

NBC spokesman Bob Meyer said the network was aware of Bernstein's complaint, but the ending was altered for artistic reasons.

"They cut it for time and they didn't want to take away the focus from the women," he said.

Bernstein was pleased with the outcome. "I didn't want any money, I just wanted them to remove the scene," he said Thursday.

The scene showed a paunchy, Hawaiian-shirted version of Bernstein on Hollywood Boulevard hustling a blonde in his search for the next Farrah.

Bernstein served as a paid consultant on "Behind the Camera: The Unauthorized Story of 'Charlie's Angels,'" which airs Monday night.

The new ending updates viewers on what happened to Fawcett and her co-stars through a voiceover by Wallace Langham, who plays Bernstein.

3 Doors Down musician charged in assault

MOSS POINT, Miss. (AP)—The bass player for the rock group 3 Doors Down has been charged with hitting a newspaper carrier who had accused him of stealing papers from a convenience-store vending machine.

Todd Harrell, 32, was charged with simple assault following the Friday dispute at the Cheap-O-Deep-O in Moss Point, near the band's hometown of Escatawpa on Mississippi's Gulf coast.

The carrier, Ronnie Boulware, 53, told investigators Harrell got out of his vehicle, struck him three times in the face and kicked him in the groin after he and his wife confronted the rocker.

Boulware told police he then got a handgun from his vehicle and threatened Harrell with it. Boulware was charged with exhibiting a weapon during the dispute.

Moss Point police Lt. Chuck Coleman said Boulware told

officers that Harrell took three newspapers from the coin-operated newspaper stand, but paid for only one.

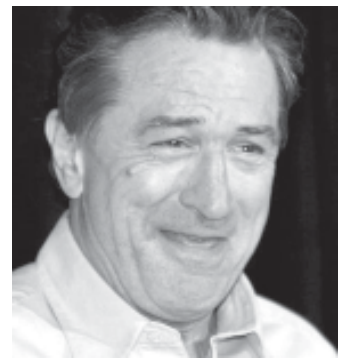
However, Harrell's attorney, Paul Benton, said the rocker entered the store to get change and then legally bought the newspapers that Boulware said were stolen.

3 Doors Down, which hit it big with the single "Kryptonite," are home after a tour to promote their second album, "Away From The Sun."

De Niro readies next Tribeca Film Fest

NEW YORK (AP)—The third Tribeca Film Festival will screen 150 works on topics ranging from South African democracy to misery in a Brazilian prison, while celebrating lower Manhattan's rebirth after the terror attacks, actor Robert De Niro said.

"We felt we needed something to heal our neighborhood and our city," said De Niro, who co-founded the annual event in his lower Manhattan neighborhood.



Robert De Niro has a laugh as he answers questions at a news conference in New York, Friday.

This year's festival offers features, documentaries, shorts and major-studio premieres that last year drew 350,000 spectators who spent \$47 million in the city. The festival will be held the first two weekends in May.

"There's a real sense of renewal and growth downtown," De Niro said at a news conference Friday at Silvercup Studios East in Queens, where he's shooting a new movie. It's also where the TV show "Sex & the City" was filmed.

The Met honors tenor Charles Anthony

NEW YORK (AP)—He's sung more performances than any solo artist in Metropolitan Opera history, most of them supporting roles that don't merit a solo bow. But on Saturday night, tenor Charles Anthony had the entire house applauding just for him.

The Met honored Anthony during the first-act intermission of Puccini's "Tosca," a performance that also marked the start of Luciano Pavarotti's farewell engagement with the company.

From his debut on March 6,

1954, as the Simpleton in Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov," Anthony has sung every single season at the Met—2,882 performances of 110 roles in all, including Saturday night as Spoletta, a spy for the chief of the secret police.

Joseph Volpe, the Met's general manager, praised Anthony as a gifted artist and warm human being who gave sage advice and comfort to generations of his colleagues.

"It's no exaggeration to say

that Charlie Anthony is the soul of the Metropolitan Opera," Volpe said.

Volpe recounted how when Anthony first auditioned, then-general manager Rudolf Bing advised him not to use his real name, Calogero Antonio Caruso, because it would be hard for audiences to accept a tenor with the same name as the legendary Enrico Caruso.

The Met's gift to Anthony was a cartoon caricature that the original Caruso had drawn of himself.

Pastimes

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY

Tiger Woods, Tracey Ullman, Davy Jones, Michael Nesmith

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: If you want to make changes, this is the year. List all the things you've been dreaming about and make them come true. Keep in mind that life is simple; it's people who make it complicated. With a little creativity and structure, success should be yours. Your numbers are 3, 10, 13, 22, 31, 40

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ARIES (*March 21-April 19*)
Be proud of what you have done in the past and push forward, making new accomplishments your goal. Recognition will be yours for the time and effort you've put in this past year. ★★



TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*)
Take the advice offered by a good friend. It may be time to give up on something that isn't working so you can move forward. Talking about your situation will help. ★★



GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*)
Rely on your contacts to help you make the right choices today. There is a struggle ahead, but it will be worth every minute you spend working toward your goal. ★★



CANCER (*June 21-July 22*)
You may want to avoid any interaction with people you deal with in a business sense. You aren't likely to get your way or make deals happen today. Someone may stand in your way. ★



LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*)
Get involved in whatever sounds enticing today. Social gatherings or getting together with people who have similar interests will lead to romance or a partnership. ★★



VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*)
Take a final look at your important papers before the year comes to a close. You still have time to make changes. A health issue may pop up if you have been overdoing it. ★★



LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*)
Don't take any partnership you have for granted. If you can't agree on the direction you should pursue, talk now before things deteriorate any further. ★★



SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*)
You may get a chance to work alongside a great team. If you wish to make a professional change, this is also a great time. An interview today could give you a whole new outlook. ★★



SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*)
You should be able to entertain anyone you are dealing with today. Your charm and knowledge will win you points and get you the results you are looking for. ★★



CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*)
You may discover that you have either spent too much or one of your financial deals has fallen through. Limitations are evident. Concentrate on the projects already in the works. ★



AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*)
Travel or short jaunts that will enable you to further your interests will bring positive results. A new acquaintance will turn out to play an important role in your life. ★★



PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*)
Don't let memories depress you, especially if you lost someone who was dear to your heart. Only by reviewing the past can you move into the future. This is the time for new beginnings. ★★

BIRTHDAY BABY: You are a bit of a daredevil, often taking chances. Most of the time you land on your feet, but every once in a while it doesn't work out the way you plan. Take caution.

(Need advice? Check out Eugenia on the Web at www.astroadvice.com or www.eugenialast.com.)

Garfield®

Adam@home


The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



Perry leads Memorial going into final

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

 **DUBLIN, Ohio (AP)** — Another brutal Saturday at Muirfield - in Ohio, not Scotland - was too much for Tiger Woods.

But not for Kenny Perry. Despite cold, whipping winds and the toughest weekend conditions at Muirfield Village in almost 20 years, Perry made only one bogey in a round of 2-under 70 and led Lee Janzen by two shots going into the final round. “That’s probably better than the 61 I shot last week,” Perry said. “The conditions were brutal. It was raw out there.”

Perry, coming off a victory at Colonial with a record score, again ended a solid round with a birdie on the 18th. His approach ran up the ridge, then trickled down the slope to 8 feet. He was at 13-under 203.

Woods, meanwhile, struggled with his swing and the gusts up to 30 mph made it look even worse. He hit a tee shot out of bounds for triple bogey and played the front nine in 42. He had to play the final four holes in 2 under to shoot 76.

It was his worst round ever at Memorial, where he is the only three-time winner, and at times it was reminiscent of his 81 in the third round of the British Open last year at Muirfield - with one exception.

“It’s a hell of a lot warmer here,” Woods said.

He wound up 11 strokes out of the lead - just like at Muirfield last summer - and no chance to catch the golf’s hottest players.

That’s not the case for a few others. Janzen, winless since his second U.S. Open title five years ago, holed two bunkers shots on the back nine - for birdie on No. 15 and for par on the No.



Kenny Perry, of Franklin, Ky., watches his tee shot on the par-5 fifth hole during the third round of the Memorial Tournament Saturday May 31, 2003 in Dublin, Ohio. Perry parred the hole.

17 - and had a 71 that left him at 11-under 202.

“I just wanted to hang in there,” Janzen said. “Regardless of what I shot, I just wanted to enjoy the day - kind of silly to enjoy a day like today - but enjoy that I play golf and I was near the lead.”

No one had a more enjoyable day than Jose Maria Olazabal. His bogey-free 66 was more than nine strokes better than the average score Saturday. That shot him up from a tie for 30th into a tie for third, along with Vijay Singh and Retief Goosen at 8-under 208.

Singh had a 72, while Goosen had three bogeys on the back nine for a 74.

Olazabal was the only player to break 70, and only 11 players broke par.

About two hours before the leaders teed off, the third round was halted for 46 minutes as a storm system passed. Left behind was the nastiest weather of

the year on the PGA Tour, with temperatures in the low 50s and gusts that spell trouble along the tree-lined fairways of Muirfield Village.

“It’s hard to judge where the wind is coming from,” Woods said. “The thing that’s hard is to get committed over a shot.”

That was evident on the first fairway. Woods held his pose and followed the flight of the ball until it landed 25 yards short of the green. He looked at the treetops in frustration, trying to figure out the swirling wind, then tossed his club at the bag.

It would get a lot worse, especially on No. 6 when Woods pulled his tee shot through the trees, into a backyard and out of bounds by about 2 feet. He walked all the way up to his ball before being told it was not in play, then had to return to the tee.

He wound up with a triple bogey

and made the turn in 42.

Woods couldn’t turn anywhere for sympathy. Eleven players shot 80 or worse, the highest number on the weekend ever at the Memorial.

John Daly drove the 343-yard 14th hole for the third straight day, and this time got a birdie. He also had two triple bogeys and a quadruple bogey for an 83.

“It’s a survival course more than anything out there,” Ernie Els said after his 70. “It’s pretty

punishing. It’s the hardest day we’ve had on the tour to date.”

That’s what made Olazabal’s round so brilliant.

The field average was 75.5, the highest for a weekend round since 1981 at Muirfield Village, and Olazabal made it look like he was at the Bob Hope Classic.


“It’s as good a round as I’ve seen in a long time,” said Jeff Sluman, his playing partner. “I’m not unhappy with my 72, but after looking at Ollie’s round, it felt like a million.”

Ohio tends to bring out the best in Olazabal. He shot a 61 up the road at Firestone in 1990 when he won the World Series of Golf, and took just as much pleasure out of this 66.

“Here, it’s a different story,” Olazabal said. “To shoot 66, I think it’s really close to that 61.”

It got him a lot closer to the lead,

San Diego Padres nip Diamondbacks, 8-7

 **SAN DIEGO (AP)** — Pinch-hitter Lou Merloni drove in the go-ahead run in San Diego’s two-run eighth inning with a sacrifice fly, lifting the Padres to an 8-7 win over the Arizona Diamondbacks on Saturday night.

Merloni’s sacrifice fly off Oscar Villarreal, Arizona’s third pitcher in the inning, gave San Diego just its sixth win in 33 games. The Padres went 5-24 in May, their worst month in team history.

Mark Loretta’s pinch-hit single of Mike Myers scored Gary Matthews Jr., who singled off Scott Service (0-1), tied it at 7-all.

Luis Gonzalez drove in four runs for Arizona and Alex Cintron went 3-for-4, including a two-run double in the top of the eighth inning. Cintron had two doubles and a triple.

Trailing 6-4 in the eighth inning, Arizona rebounded with back-to-back doubles by Matt Williams and Cintron off Jesse Orosco (1-1).

Matt Herges pitched the ninth for his second saves in three opportunities.

The Diamondbacks’ rally started off Luther Hackman, who hit Junior Spivey



San Diego Padres’ Rondell White is tagged out by Arizona Diamondbacks catcher Rod Barajas after he tried to score from third on a flyball to left in seventh inning of their game Saturday night, May 31, 2003, in San Diego. Umpire Phil Cuzzi makes the call.

leading off the eighth. Mark Grace’s one-out single knocked out Hackman.

Williams, pinch-hitting for Tony Womack, doubled into the left-field corner off Orosco, scoring Spivey and cutting the lead to 6-5. Cintron then ripped a double into the left-center field gap to put Arizona ahead.

Gonzalez hit a two-run homer in the

first inning and threw out a runner at home plate.

Ryan Klesko homered and drove in two runs for the Padres, who scored five runs in the first after Arizona went up 2-0.

Klesko contributed an RBI single in the first, and hit his 10th home run of the season, a solo shot with two

outs, to put San Diego ahead 6-2 in the third inning.

Bennett’s two-run single capped the five-run first inning off Arizona starter Elmer Dessens when the Padres amassed a season-high seven hits. Xavier Nady and Matthews Jr. also drove in a run apiece.

Dessens settled down after the rough first inning. The right-hander allowed one run on four hits over the next four innings. Dessens finished by allowing six runs and 11 hits in five innings.

Gonzalez hit a two-run homer, his 11th, in the first inning off Adam Eaton, and cut the San Diego lead to 6-3 in the third with a run-scoring double that scored Cintron, who doubled.

After Eaton walked the first two batters in the fifth, Gonzalez added an RBI single. The Diamondbacks loaded the bases with a two-out walk to Lyle Overbay, but Eaton escaped further damage when he induced Spivey to ground out.

Gonzalez prevented the Padres from adding to their lead when he caught Nady’s fly ball in left-field foul territory and threw out Rondell White on a three-hop throw to catcher Rod Barajas.

MLB STANDINGS

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Team	W	L	Pct	G
N.Y. Yankees	32	23	.582	-
Boston	31	23	.574	1½
Toronto	31	26	.544	2
Baltimore	27	27	.500	4½
Tampa Bay	21	33	.389	10½

Central Division

Minnesota	31	23	.574	-
Kansas City	27	26	.509	3½
Chi. White Sox	25	29	.463	6
Cleveland	21	32	.396	9½
Detroit	14	39	.264	16½

West Division

Seattle	36	18	.667	-
Oakland	31	23	.574	5
Anaheim	26	27	.491	9½
Texas	25	29	.463	11

Yesterday's Games

Detroit 4, N.Y. Yankees 2
Chicago White Sox at Cleveland, ppd, rain
Oakland 7, Kansas City 6
Toronto 10, Boston 7
Seattle 5, Minnesota 2
Anaheim 6, Tampa Bay 1
Baltimore 7, Texas 1

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

Atlanta	37	18	.673	-
Montreal	33	22	.600	4
Philadelphia	29	25	.537	7½
Florida	26	31	.456	12
N.Y. Mets	25	30	.455	12

Central Division

Chi. Cubs	30	24	.556	-
Houston	29	27	.518	2
St. Louis	27	27	.500	3
Cincinnati	26	29	.473	4½
Pittsburgh	24	30	.444	6
Milwaukee	21	34	.382	9½

West Division

San Francisco	34	20	.630	-
Los Angeles	31	24	.564	3½
Colorado	27	29	.482	8
Arizona	25	30	.455	9½
San Diego	16	40	.286	19

Yesterday's Games

N.Y. Mets 4, Atlanta 2
Chicago Cubs 1, Houston 0, 16 innings
Pittsburgh 4, St. Louis 3
Florida 3, Cincinnati 2
Montreal at Philadelphia, ppd, rain
San Diego 8, Arizona 7
Los Angeles 3, Milwaukee 0
San Francisco 2, Colorado 1

Mighty Ducks top Devils 3-2 in OT

By ALAN ROBINSON
AP SPORTS WRITER

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)— Martin Brodeur showed he's not perfect, but the Anaheim Mighty Ducks still are in playoff overtime—and that's why they're still alive in the Stanley Cup finals.

Ruslan Salei scored off Adam Oates' faceoff win at 6:59 into overtime and the Mighty Ducks, taking advantage of one of the biggest misplays of Brodeur's career, beat the New Jersey Devils 3-2 in Game 3 Saturday night.

Oates fed the puck off the faceoff to Salei at the top of the slot, and Brodeur barely reacted to his one-timer as the Mighty Ducks improved to 6-0 in playoff overtimes. The Devils are 2-2.

It was essentially a must-win game for the Ducks, who played with the desperation expected of a team that trailed 2-0 in the series and almost certainly would have had no chance to raise the cup had it lost.

Ducks coach Mike Babcock joked that Salei is one of his hardest shooters, if not the most accurate.

"He can really shoot the puck. We always tell him shoot the puck on net once in a while," Babcock said. "He bangs the puck off the glass with the best of them."

Salei said the faceoff win was so clean, "You've got to shoot. So far, it's the biggest goal I've ever scored. We had to win this game. We had to get some momentum going. Now maybe it will go seven games, or six."



AP
New Jersey Devils' Scott Gomez, left, is congratulated by teammate Patrik Elias following his third period goal against the Anaheim Mighty Ducks in Game 3 of the Stanley Cup Finals in Anaheim, Calif., Saturday, May 31, 2003. Elias had an assist on the play.

Salei's goal was his second of the playoffs.

Game 4 will be Monday night, when the Devils can either take a commanding 3-1 lead or the Mighty Ducks will tie a series they seemed out of following two dominating Devils wins in New Jersey.

Overtime playoff wins have largely been responsible for Anaheim's remarkable playoff run, which began with three consecutive series-opening overtime victories.

Goalie Jean-Sebastien Giguere has been unbeatable in overtime, with an NHL-record overtime scoreless streak of 166 minutes, 4 seconds. He broke Patrick Roy's record of 162:56 early in the overtime.

Giguere turned aside 29 of 31 shots in by far his best game of the finals.

The Devils trailed 2-1 in the second after Brodeur lost his stick and couldn't defend Sandis Ozolinsh's seemingly harmless shot as it trickled in from the blue line.

"It happens to the best of the goaltenders," Devils coach Pat Burns said. "You don't think Patrick Roy ever made a play like that? It's not the end of the world. You're going to fault the goaltender for that? I'm not."

Babcock said the misplay gave the Ducks a huge lift.

"I thought that was the break we needed," he said.

But the Devils tied it at 2 when Scott Gomez deflected Grant Marshall's wrist from above the right circle past Giguere at 9:11 of the third. Gomez has two goals in the finals after

scoring only once in 16 games.

That might have won it had Brodeur not made a grievous mistake on a play that couldn't have been more routine.

Only 45 seconds after the Devils' Patrik Elias tied it at 1, Giguere fed the puck up ice to Ozolinsh who, draped by two Devils, pushed it toward the net.

Brodeur, positioned at the left of the crease, began to scramble over to play the puck, only to drop his stick. With Brodeur unable to defend, the puck trickled into the side of the net as the goalie dropped to his knees, raising his hand to his head in disbelief.

It was a perfectly awful play by the goalie who was near perfect for the first seven periods of the series.

"Obviously, they got breaks and that's what it's all about. They got them and we didn't get them," Burns said. "We had a great chance tonight (to go up 3-0). But it came down to errors and mistakes, like every hockey game does."

The maddening misplay at 14:47 of the second came slightly more than 11 minutes after Ozolinsh set up Anaheim's first goal of the series, by the infrequently used Marc Chouinard. That goal at 3:39 of the second ended Brodeur's scoreless streak of 143 minutes, 39 seconds, the second-longest to start the finals.

Ozolinsh shot the puck toward the net from along the boards, and it deflected off Chouinard's stick and past Brodeur to the glove side. The Devils scored the first goal in each of the first two games on their home ice, and the Ducks never challenged after that in either game.

Larry Brown to coach Pistons, AP learns

By LARRY LAGE
AP SPORTS WRITER



AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP) — Rick Carlisle sat elbow-to-elbow with the man who had just fired him, Joe Dumars. In a bizarre scene, talk turned to Larry Brown, who will become Detroit's next coach.

"If you think he's going to bring in a stiff behind me, you're nuts," Carlisle said Saturday. "He's going to bring in a big-time guy, and if he can do that he will have done his job."

Carlisle was fired with one year and \$2 million left on his contract despite winning two straight division titles, 100 regular-season games, a Coach of the Year award and leading the Pistons to the Eastern Conference finals for the first time since 1991.

He will be replaced by Brown, who has already reached agreement with the Pistons on a long-term deal, according to a source within the league with knowledge of the discussions between the Pistons and Brown. The source spoke to The Associated Press on condition of

anonymity, saying the hiring will become official on Monday.

Saturday's news conference was strange — Carlisle poking fun at himself during an opening statement, then initiating jokes and defending the decision when Dumars was pressed to explain the dismissal.

"The guy at the gate almost wouldn't let me in to my own firing," Carlisle said.

When Dumars said, "This is not a fun day at all," Carlisle quipped: "It's all right. You can have fun with it."

Brown resigned as coach of the Philadelphia 76ers on Monday after six seasons. The Sixers released him from a contractual clause that prohibited him from coaching another NBA team if he left Philadelphia prematurely.

Counting Detroit, there are eight NBA coaching vacancies.

When asked about Brown, Dumars said, "We'll be talking to him," adding that he has heard Brown's name linked to openings in Houston, Cleveland and Washington.

"This is not about Larry Brown, this is about Rick Carlisle," Dumars said.

Brown did not return two messages left by The AP at his home.

Philadelphia captain Eric

Snow understands why the Pistons are going after his former coach.

"With Rick Carlisle gone, it would be great for Detroit's organization if it was fortunate enough to get Larry Brown," Snow said. "He's a Hall of Famer who is a great coach and a great teacher that would make every one of their players better, and that would make the Pistons even better."

Carlisle, in his first head coaching job, helped turn Detroit from a lottery team into the top-seeded squad in the East this season. He was honored as NBA Coach of the Year for the 2001-02 season.

He led the Pistons to a 100-64 regular-season record and a 12-15 postseason mark over two years.

The Pistons' season ended May 24 when they were swept by New Jersey in the conference finals. Carlisle's coaching was publicly criticized during the first round when Detroit fell behind 3-1 against Orlando. But he turned to little-used Tayshaun Price and Mehmet Okur to generate some offense and help the Pistons advance.

"You can get into a conversation about what may or not be fair, or you can be excited about being at the peak of your career," Carlisle said. "I'll look

back and remember the good things and the things that were accomplished by a group that no one thought had a chance."

Carlisle was hired as Detroit's coach on May 25, 2001, after the team fired George Irvine following a 32-50 season. There was believed to be tension between Dumars and Carlisle, but both denied that was true Saturday.

Carlisle said he was unsure if he would pursue a coaching job right away or take a year off to be a television analyst.

"There was never any talk of an extension, there was none from me to Joe, or from them to me. I didn't feel that one was owed to me," Carlisle said. "I was ready to honor the last year of my contract and be judged after three years. That would've been fine."

Brown, 62, had two years left in his contract that paid him \$6 million per season in Philadelphia.

He also coached Denver (five years), Indiana (four years), San Antonio (3 1/2 years), New Jersey (two years), Carolina of the ABA (two years) and the Clippers (18 months).

Brown's tenure with the Sixers was his longest in his 31-year coaching career. He led the Sixers to the playoffs for five straight seasons, including the 2001 NBA Finals, and will coach



AP
Philadelphia 76ers head coach Larry Brown directs his team in the first quarter in this April 15, 2003 photo, in Chicago against the Chicago Bulls. The Detroit Pistons fired coach Rick Carlisle and will hire Larry Brown, a source within the league said Saturday, May 31, 2003.

the U.S. men's national team this summer at an Olympic qualifying tournament in Puerto Rico.

He has a 879-685 record in the NBA, and 1,285-853 overall, including ABA and college. Brown won an NCAA championship with Kansas in 1988, and became the first coach to take six NBA teams to the playoffs when the 76ers made it in 1999.

Brown would inherit a

Pistons team that has the No. 2 pick in the June 26 draft. Detroit will likely select a scorer — Darko Milicic of Serbia or Syracuse's Carmelo Anthony — to complement a young nucleus of Richard Hamilton, Chauncey Billups, Ben Wallace and rookies Okur and Prince.

Brown's brother, Herb, was head coach of the Pistons from 1975-76 through 1977-78.





Mobil blasts past PDI
Host Mobil Oil was armed and dangerous last Thursday as they gunned down Pacific Development Inc, 103-68, in the second day of competition in the Mobil Oil Invitational Basketball Tournament.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Arenas leads Warriors past Jazz, 108-95

Gilbert Arenas scored 27 points and the Golden State Warriors beat the Utah Jazz 108-95 Saturday night to win for the fifth time in six games.

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